

ADDRESS

TO A

YOUNG LADY

ON HER

ENTRANCE INTO THE WORLD.

---

IN

TWO VOLUMES.

---

VOL. II.

---

LONDON:

Printed for HOOKHAM and CARPENTER, New-Bond Street.

---

1796.

ADDRESS

YOUNG LADY

LETTER TO THE WORLD

TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II

LONDON:

Printed by J. G. & Co. 10, St. Paul's Churchyard, Newgate Street.

1791



---

ON  
**FORTITUDE**  
OF  
**MIND.**

---

**T**HAT temper of the mind which I have been recommending under the term content, as indispensably requisite to the performance of our duty, and the preservation of happiness in the smooth paths of uniform prosperity, I shall now consider as tried by adversity, and exercised by difficulties, from whose discipline it rises into the more dignified character of fortitude. To me it seems, that the essential difference in these qualities, subsists only in the circumstances by which they are excited to operate. As content is the repose of a good mind, resting in a perfect submission to the will of God, established on a due sense of the wisdom of his dispensations, so is fortitude the action of such a mind, when roused into arduous exertion by exigences that demand the sacrifice of somewhat dear in

## FORTITUDE.

possession, or call upon us to encounter sufferings with alacrity, to meet danger with courage, and support affliction with dignity. Fortitude is therefore, when pure and perfect, that spirit which is so frequently recommended by the founder of Christianity. The frequent exhortations to take up his cross, I understand to be injunctions to the cultivation of a uniform and perfect fortitude; which, when arrived at its maturity, will enable us to discharge every duty, render us active to combat every seduction, firm to resist every temptation, and submissive to every dispensation of Providence through a clear conviction, that they are necessary links in that chain of degrees framed by unerring wisdom, and an unshaken confidence of reward in a happy futurity.

That fortitude is essentially necessary to the completion of a great and good character, is a truth peculiarly enforced by the Christian tenets. The profession or rather the practice of Christianity, is generally described in the New Testament by following its author. To this effect he emphatically says, "he that taketh not his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me." What is meant by taking up the cross, he clearly intimates in another passage, "if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and

“take up his cross and follow me.” Nor is our refusing to be the followers of our great master left to our choice, without a warning of the mischief that awaits our refusal. There is no neutrality for us, as he himself assures us; “he that is not with me, is against me;” “and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad. In return for our compliance he promises to his followers, that they shall enjoy with him the state of being to which he should be exalted.

That great luminary of our religion, St. Paul, warmly exhorts us to perseverance in the execution of whatever may be appointed us by Providence, by looking up to the example of courage and constancy in trials and sufferings, displayed in the life and death of Christ; who first led the way in that arduous path of submission to the decrees of Heaven, which he took such pains to recommend, and which experience continually shews to be the only safe road to lead us out of the various perplexities annexed for just purposes to our present state of existence.

The same Apostle furnishes us with an antidote against the dangerous and uncomfortable idea, which some might entertain in affliction, that God is a Being who delights to

punish; by informing us, that his chastisements are as those of a parent to his child; which we know are inflicted with a reluctance that nothing but a hope of his child's advantage could conquer. Ye have forgotten, says he, the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children; my son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him; for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth. We have had fathers of our flesh that corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection to the father of spirits? No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

It is a general observation, that those who have been long used to prosperity, bear affliction with the least apparent patience. They shrink from it with pusillanimity, and murmur that bitterness is shed into a cup, whose sweetness they have drained through a series of years. Yet to these there is a motive for rejoicing in sorrow, which the unfortunate have not. They have a superior opportunity of manifesting their obedience and resignation to almighty wisdom. A constant course of hardship is through long habit borne with



ease; but a change of happiness to misery is a far greater trial, and requires much more strength of mind to endure. Truly respectable are those who unfeignedly say, shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?

Suppose a person blessed with all the advantages of fortune, happy in his family and friends, allowed many years of uninterrupted enjoyment; but, at length checked by the loss of health, and become lame, blind, or deaf: would not you esteem the murmurs of such a one unreasonable, irreligious, unworthy of a Christian? Ought he not rather to reflect that riches and prosperity are adventitious and transitory, and that no man is to expect an exemption from adversity, but to prepare for it in common with those multitudes whose distresses may exceed his own? Ought he not, therefore, to meet with fortitude, and accept with submission, that share of calamity which has fallen to his lot? How else has he approved himself the worthy disciple of him who taught us the precepts of truth and virtue at the expence of his life?

Surely it is not seriously to be desired, that we should live here a life of uninterrupted prosperity? The uncertainty of our residence

here, convinces us, that there is a necessity to be always prepared for that awful moment, when the pride of life shall fade away, and we must turn our eyes to the gulph which parts time from eternity. But unclouded prosperity dazzles the mind, and makes it forget the necessity of that preparation. Is it therefore to be wished, that at the moment we part from this world, our minds should have no other interests than those fleeting enjoyments which are now passing to their genuine nothingness? Should we not recollect before the arrival of this decisive hour, that too much friendship with the world is enmity with God? How devoutly would the trembling soul of a man involved in conscious guilt, and called upon by unexpected death, long for a few years of frail life, were it of pain and misery, in which to atone for its transgressions, and to obtain the favour of that Being of whom it had neglected to cultivate the knowledge! With what agony would it behold the fast approach of that dread moment, which was to close the account that must be settled at the day of judgement! a day, which, whether it be distant a thousand or millions of ages, is to the dying man immediate on his departure from mortality.

The declaration of St. Paul to his disciples, exhibits a striking picture of the dignity



of pious fortitude; such a one as contrasted with the terrors of a person wedded to the present state of his existence, should create in every heart a readiness to embrace those afflictions, which might wean it from the world.

And now behold, says St. Paul, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there; save that in every city, bonds and afflictions abide me; but none of these things move me; neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord.

An implicit and intrepid resignation to our destiny, as ordained by Heaven, is that kind of fortitude here recommended: it is the shield of all the other virtues; it renders them permanent, consistent, pure. But there is a firmness essential to the existence of this virtue, which is with difficulty acquired by minds of extreme sensibility. For besides the anguish that such a mind suffers from every touch of woe, it has often an enthusiasm in its sorrows, that induces it to think indulgence in them is a virtue. So far is it from striving to divert the grief which overwhelms it, that it is dissatisfied in feeling the violence of its emotions subside, and is ingenious in its endeavours to sharpen anew the edge of suffering, and to

draw fresh blood from the wounds, which time and nature strive to heal.

These bigots of sensibility are the counterparts of those poor creatures, who harrow their flesh and torture themselves by every species of self-inflicted cruelty, in honour of religion, and for the service of God. Melancholy and degrading as are these excesses, yet enthusiasm under due restraints, may not only serve to elevate virtue, but may prove a soother of the bitterest pangs of affliction. It is therefore of the highest importance, that the mind of trembling sensibility should be supplied with other aids to support its weakness, than those it derives from its own nature. Efficacious aids will be found in the precepts of the gospel, whose mild spirit is so congenial to its own feelings: thence it may derive a force powerful enough to controul their excesses, and to retain them within due limits, when reason shall be chased by sorrow from the helm, and enthusiasm shall strive to take her place. It cannot too strongly be inculcated that enthusiasm is the bane of all religion. It is a pilot that steers designedly into whirlpools, and rushes impetuous on the sharpest rocks, while the mind it conducts, dazzled and deluded, mistakes the rashness of its unskilful guide for magnani-

mity, and beholds the efforts of reviving reason to recover its powers, as the attempts of a cold and timid spirit to overrule those ideas of heroic suffering which it has been tutored to cherish, as elevating the soul above humanity. Such are the lessons taught by enthusiasm, which is apt to consider even the necessary cares imposed on us by our present condition, as fit only to interest vulgar minds, and occupy the attention of those who have never known the refinements of sensibility, and are strangers to the generous feelings produced by exalted sentiments. Errors of this kind are the more to be lamented, as they frequently infect the most pious minds, and become the torment of the purest and most innocent hearts.

Such errors indeed often draw contempt on the sincerest virtue. Many there are, enveloped in impenetrable apathy, who scornfully smile at the childish gratifications of such minds. But by those let it be remembered, that insensibility is not more distant from enthusiasm than from fortitude. There can be no merit in enduring, where there is no capability of feeling pain. Should your mind be exempted from the evils that flow from extreme sensibility, yet do not suffer it to regard with scorn, those weaknesses in others to which it is itself superior. Surely enthusiasts of for-

row, while they hurt only themselves, are objects of compassion, though the world beholds them with contempt, treats them with ridicule, and sometimes persecutes them with malevolence. It is totally repugnant to reason and humanity, as well as inimical to the spirit of Christianity, to inflict the lash on one bleeding under the discipline of his own frenzy. If ridicule be ever used with success against this disorder, it must be gently and delicately applied. Religion is a safer and more effectual medicine: to that let the enthusiast of affliction turn with a desire to be healed, and his cure will be certain. There will he learn to raise his thoughts above the miseries of life, in confidence that they are intended only for his trial. He will seek in resignation to Providence for that peace the world cannot give; he will place his reliance on that Being whose dispensations are wisdom; he will comfort himself with the reflection, that "the eyes of the Lord are upon them that love him; he is their protection and stay; he raiseth up the soul and lighteneth the eyes; he giveth health, life, and all blessings."

Should the heart bleed for the loss of the dearest objects of its affections, it will feel the excess of its agony relieved by recollecting,



that the Christian is not to sorrow like those who are without hope; for though it has lost all it valued here, yet the sudden departure of its treasure might be in mercy to the object whose loss is lamented; or it might be, that attachment to the creature exceeded that due to the Creator, whom we are commanded to love above all things. But whatever afflictions assail us, let us principally remember that they are often the means of much good, and though imperceptibly at first, they ultimately operate for our welfare. Let us at the same time not forget that the causes of our sorrow cannot have a long duration, and that every accident which sets us looser from the world, brings us nearer to the mansion of rest and comfort from all grief and care. Supported by such motives, we shall no longer indulge immoderate sorrow, but manfully strive to moderate its violence, by cultivating a spirit of acquiescence in that order and chain of events of which our trials form a part. Observations of this nature will readily occur to those who are willing not to reject the proffers of rational piety in the hour of trouble. Added to the all-lenient hand of time, they never fail to alleviate the heaviest calamities, and to restore peace and serenity, where it was imagined they were departed for ever.

When the mind sinks under the weight of unkindness and hard treatment, the unmerited scorn of an unfeeling world, or the ingratitude of those from whom it expected the consolations of sympathy and friendship, let us advert to the words and the example of Christ, assuredly the best model we can copy, as well as the best adviser we can listen to. We shall thence learn that we are neither to revenge, nor even to resent the ill treatment we receive. Who was ever so conspicuous in administering to the necessities of all denominations of people, in admonishing them of their duty, relieving them in their distresses, comforting them in their afflictions, attending on them in sickness, and restoring them to health, dedicating in short his whole life to the service of mankind? And yet, who was ever more ungratefully used, and more barbarously requited, for the benefits he was continually rendering to society? Who shall complain of ill usage, when so sublime a character underwent without murmuring every species of hardship and tribulation, and instead of reward for the good he had done, was treated like a criminal, and put to death in a manner equally cruel and ignominious. Such a precedent silences at once all pretences of complaint, and teaches men that whatever their sufferings may be, they are bound to



bear them without repining at their lot, and to rest in the assurance that the directing hand of an all-provident Being conducts whatever happens to a just and proper issue; and that though to our stunted perception the equity of his dispensations may not be discernible, yet the time will come when it will be made manifest, and his ways, however inscrutable at present, shall be unanswerably justified.

Notwithstanding the many powerful motives resolutely to combat and rise superior to difficulties, there are numbers of your sex who neglect to cultivate fortitude, from a persuasion that it is a masculine virtue, which in them would be of neither ornament nor propriety. So bigoted are several to this opinion, as to affect fears when they are not alarmed, distresses which they do not feel, and weaknesses by which they are not affected, for no other reason than that they may not appear capable of so unfeminine a quality as fortitude, accounting it a no less essential qualification even in man, in any less trying situations than the field of battle, the bed of death, a prison, the scaffold, or cases similar. Those who deem armour useless, are only such as have escaped wounds. It would by this rule, not be judging too severely, to conclude that those who regard fortitude as no requisite in the female

character, have been peculiarly exempted from those occasions wherein its advantages would have been ascertained by experience of the support it bestows. The mind that is capable of those sorrows which arise from sensibility, feels every moment how much it is exposed to suffering, by the want of a quality, which would enable it to meet affliction with courage, and to deprive it of those stings, which it borrows from a disposition too tender and sympathising. A mind thus framed must wish for a firmer make, a shield to guard, and armour to resist. Fortitude will therefore be necessarily desired, sought, and cultivated, though not perhaps attainable in the perfection aimed at, by a heart which values it in proportion as it feels its want. Is it not in fact the virtue of which the female character stands most in need? To whom can acquired strength be more acceptable, more useful, than to those who are naturally weak? In whom is a spirit to meet pain or sorrow with courage, more necessary, than in those whose delicacy of frame and softness of mind exposes them to the attacks of both? Fortitude may be attained by the most feminine disposition. This is daily evinced in numerous instances, that must fall under the observation of every one who studies human nature. Nor is it less observable, that fortitude derives its best support

from the united influence of piety and sensibility. We thence are taught to look forward to a better futurity, as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul in the storms that disquiet life; and the religion that teaches universal benevolence, and particularly enjoins compassion to the afflicted, must be so dear to the feeling mind, as to render insensibility a criterion of impiety. To be defective therefore in such quality as fortitude, which includes not only strength to bear, but commiseration to those that endure sufferings, implying a want of humanity, and consequently a defect of piety, a philanthropic and pious disposition will naturally consider fortitude as an indispensable qualification.

But there is a kind of fortitude, in which the mind though unassailed by sorrows, will have occasion for all the firmness it is able to exert. It is not affliction alone that holds out opportunity for the exertion of this quality. Temptation to evil does not always assume the terrific shape of adversity: it is more successful when its aim is to seduce than when it endeavours to compel. Seduction always succeeds best with the young, the giddy, and the dissipated. It is in the moments of relaxation and festivity, and when the mind is least upon its guard, that sinful thoughts invade

it. Do not imagine, however, that it is necessary to lock the mind in joyless apathy, in order to secure it from the poison it is liable to imbibe from the cup of pleasure: as well might we refuse wholesome food, because some of the worst disorders to which the body is subject, are the consequence of gluttony. The body must have nourishment, as the mind relaxation: danger is only in excess. To avoid this danger, it is necessary to be armed with a quick sense of our duties, in order to be perpetually on our guard against the first approaches of evil. From vigilance and caution we shall derive the capacity to resist it, or in other words, sufficient fortitude not to be seduced into criminal indulgence. The love of pleasure will not entice us to an excessive pursuit even of those which are in themselves innocent. We shall not from views of fallacious advantages, be led to sacrifice our integrity, or our principles, or to prostitute our talents and attachment to the wicked or the worthless. Neither will the sneers of the vicious, however exalted, have power to raise a blush, that we have acted so as to excite their ridicule, or their scorn; much less will they engage us to join the laugh against those things which we reverence in our hearts. With a steady and pious fortitude, we shall dare not only to be, but also to appear, vir-



tuous, even where virtue is kept least in countenance, in the presence of the bold offender who boasts of his irregularities, and treats religious sentiments as the disorder of weak minds. We shall so act, in short, as to render our Christianity respectable, and to prevent our good from being ill spoken of. But this resolute fortitude must be acquired before the hour of trial arrives, or we shall be little able to summon its aid, to collect our scattered senses, and withstand the sudden attacks of impiety, chiefly when levelled in unexpected mockery at our pretences and ideas of rectitude. Let us then endeavour to be clad, according to the figurative language of St. Paul, in the whole armour of righteousness; let our minds be armed with a firm conviction of the indispensable necessity of leading a pious life; let our hearts be filled with courage and determination to obey the dictates of conscience; and let our conscience be duly enlightened by a clear and perfect knowledge of our duties.

One very successful weapon now used by levity against every thing serious, is the imputation of methodism. Not that such as brand you with that name, can give a satisfactory account of those tenets, which constitute the faith of those fanatic sectaries who denominate

themselves methodists. Yet are thousands deterred from practices which their reason approves, and their religion requires, by the fear of being reputed one of those visionaries. This is in the metropolis a widely-spreading evil: not only the young and the ignorant are terrified by the sound of this appellation, but even worthy characters are led to countenance things they cannot approve, in order to shield themselves from this humiliating imputation. I hope, my dear friend, your mind possesses fortitude sufficient to render it superior to the influence of this dangerous timidity. Is it not a melancholy reflection, that folly and licentiousness shall walk unblushing in the broad gaze of general observation, while by a single word, they can disarm virtue of its natural courage, and drive it to hide its confusion in obscurity? Let not your understanding yield to such degradation. Remember that while your conduct is rational and consistent, none but the malicious or the thoughtless will call it in question; and the silence of these deserves not to be purchased by unmanly condescensions. Should you be apprehensive that your character may be lessened by the charge of fanaticism, reflect who they are with whom the aspersion can injure you. If it be ill founded, it will be confuted by those who



know you ; and strangers will not care whether you are a methodist or an infidel. The only persons who may listen to the accusation, are those loquacious individuals who make it their business to spread every idle report that comes to their hearing ; but as little dependence is placed upon what they say, it either passes unnoticed, or is soon forgotten:

However necessary fortitude may be in those cases we have enumerated, there is yet another instance wherein it is of much higher importance, as appears by the terrors of those who are without it, as much as by the tranquillity of those who possess it. The circumstance that gives it this high importance, is the approach of death: an event, which though daily recurring to our eyes as the inevitable fate of all that breathe, we cannot familiarize to our feelings, nor behold without the strongest emotion. Human nature shrinks from it with peculiar horror, when it considers the darkness that involves all that is to follow: even misery itself groaning under oppression, sorrow, and infirmities, prefers the load of wretchedness it bears, to the awful prospect of an obscure futurity. Whence proceed these terrors? It is not always guilt that shakes the soul when on the eve of dissolution from the body. Nor is it affection to

this transitory world, or mistrust of those promises which assure to virtue a happy hereafter; for some, eminently good men, have shuddered on the brink of the grave. That we should so pathetically lament the sorrows annexed to our present existence, and profess the hope of a better, and yet regard with dread the change which is to transfer us to that more desirable state, is an inconsistency unworthy of a man whose conscience is clear, and who consequently need not terrify himself with groundless apprehensions: the guilty alone should tremble at an after-reckoning. How happens it then, that without the aggravation of conscious guilt, these fears should be too strong for the controul of reason? The fact is, that the love of life is like a tree, which the longer it stands, the deeper it is rooted; it increases as we live, and strengthens with years: young people are always less attached to life, than either the old or the elderly. The dread of death may therefore arise from the sorrow to quit life, in the same manner as we grieve at parting with an old and dear friend. When people whose conduct has been generally upright, without any crime to preponderate against it, seem troubled in mind, and are afraid to die, their fears are probably caused by the appearance of an object, of which they have hitherto studiously avoided

the contemplation. Were the idea of death rendered familiar to the imagination, by often reflecting that it is inevitable, and by considering it as continually drawing near, it would not be so terrible when it approached; the mind would gradually be habituated to view it with composure, and the frequent reflection on the uncertainty of our tenure, must necessarily render us less attached to those objects of sense that fascinate and fix our affections here. It is certainly an awful thought, that a moment shall transport us from all that we hold dear in this world, to meet the judge of all mankind: why should it, however, be more terrific in the hour of death, than to-day or to-morrow? But while the body is in health, the mind rests secure, that the object of its terror is far distant. Alas! what is this distance which affords so much confidence? Is any thing in this transitory state more precarious? But allowing life were secured for the longest period that mortality can attain, however distant its termination may seem in prospect, still to the reverted eye that turns from the bed of death a retrospective glance on the days that are no more, even a hundred years will be as nothing. Of the comparative littleness of time when past, we are all sensible by looking forward to any future period, and by reflecting on a similar portion

which has elapsed. In June the December coming seems far from us; the last appears as just gone by: yet the kalendar shews me that each are equally distant from that month which is now present. It is a dangerous thing to persuade ourselves that death is far off; since by so doing, we render it sudden, unexpected, unwelcome, even though a hundred years have rolled over our heads. Thence it is we yield to temptation on the supposed sufficiency of time for repentance. But let us beware of indulging so very fallacious a confidence: forgiveness is promised indeed to those who are truly penitent; but is it credible that in the nature of things, any real contrition can exist in those, who deliberately commit sin, on a presumption of being admitted to that amnesty, which in reason can include only those who sincerely repent?

The habitual consideration of death as every moment possible, is the best preparation for its real approach, by the influence it has over our lives. It enables us to enjoy the moral certainty of meeting death with the rational composure of pious hope, superior to the horrors of an alarmed imagination. Persons who live conscientiously, need not apprehend the terrific phantoms attending the hour of dissolution. By previously considering it with



calmness, they will divest it of all those concomitances that render it terrible; they will view it simply as a passage to another stage of existence; they will look on this passage as the means of attaining what they have so long desired, a place of rest from the disquietudes of life, and where they will receive the reward of their virtues.

The frequent recollection of our latter end, will naturally be accompanied by reflections on the uncertainty of life. But to bring this subject nearer to your observation, by more deeply interesting your feelings, permit me to remind you of the two recent instances of this kind that have happened in your own family. On hearing of the sudden death of Mr. P——, did you not experience a deep sense of awe, mixed with your regret? Did you not for some time experience an apprehension, that a moment might terminate your own existence, or that of some object most dear to your heart? And did you not learn from that apprehension, that an indispensable necessity subsists of being ever prepared to obey that summons which may deny to you, as was denied to Mr. P——, a moment's recollection, a moment to meditate the shortest supplication? Were you not under these impressions indifferent to the frivolous circumstances that fill up the

daily circle of life? Did not those objects seem trifling, which an hour before might have appeared important enough to excite competition, and to justify the sacrifice of domestic ease and comfort for their attainment? Did not unusual prospects open on your mind? And did not the various obligations imposed upon you, rush into your memory, and call your conscience to a strict account in what manner you had discharged them. Was you not struck with the deepest conviction of the indispensable duty of attending to them preferably to all other objects, and of the terrible consequences you hazarded by neglecting them? These, or something like these, must, I am certain, have been your sensations and your reflections. Or if they failed to spring immediately from the news of the event, they must have been afterwards suggested by the consolation that every one declared to find in the retrospect of Mr. P——'s life. A life, which was not only free from guilt, but filled with the exertions of active benevolence, particularly in the case of those to whom good men alone will give personal service. Surely no heart, however insensible, could fail to be touched with that circumstance, seemingly accidental, which attended his end. I mean his being on an errand of charity, when it pleased the Almighty God to close his ac-



count. How desirable is it thus to conclude a life of virtue in the execution of an act of kindness.

Scarcely could the impressions made by the sudden death of Mr. P—— be effaced, when another relation bequeathed in dying, a fresh lecture on the instability of life, and a striking proof at the same time, that virtue disarms death of its terrors, and robs the grave of its victory. Whence, but from reflecting on a life of the purest virtue, and sincerest piety, could Mr. E. F—— derive that unshaken tranquillity with which he beheld his approaching dissolution? Whence, but from the best-founded hopes, could arise that happiness which he expressed in the last words he uttered? Let me intreat you not to suffer this instance of the power of religion to pass lightly over your mind. Enumerate the ties which bound him to life; consider the cheerful resignation with which he saw them bursting asunder; and while your heart expands with wonder and admiration, thankfully accept so shining a proof with what facility and readiness he can put off mortality; who feels no alarm at the prospect of a future state.

It is by converting the examples and warnings which fall within our observation, to our

improvement in piety and morality, to the correction of what is wrong, and the confirmation of what is right in sentiment or conduct, that we grow wise unto salvation. If by a faulty levity of spirit or hardness of heart, the lessons thus given to us, are neglected, or fail of their due effect, we must expect to meet with the same retribution that was adjudged to him who neglected the talent consigned to his use. The letter of our duty is short, plain, comprehensive: the spirit and meaning of this letter is daily displayed in unnumbered ways. God has given the text, and we are to look for a commentary and application in those actions among men, and those events in society that are placed before us for our observation, in order to a more extensive illustration of that text, and to render it of general utility. Some incidents which are salutary to contemplate, may yet be painful to dwell upon; others there are, at once pleasurable and improving: of the latter kind, is the review of extraordinary virtue, particularly in the last scene of its mortal existence. For, however grief and melancholy may shade the picture with tints of sorrow, yet it is a sorrow so mingled with delight, that joy cannot touch the heart with a sensation so impressive on its feelings, as it receives from

those chastened scenes, where virtue triumphs over pain and death.

Mr. E. F—— exhibits a clear confutation of that trite apology for the faults of the great, which is founded on a supposition, that large fortunes must inevitably produce corruption of manners. This pretended necessity they employ as an instrument to efface the stain of vice, and eradicate shame from the guilty mind, thereby to give full scope and licence to all that ungoverned passion or absurd vanity can suggest. But surely it is inconsistent with the goodness of the governor of the world, that a necessity of sin should subsist any where: nor can there be any station in society, that is incompatible with the virtues of social life; and these only are the virtues that Scripture teaches, and reason approves. The ways of the prosperous are, undoubtedly, beset with dangers to virtue, that are peculiar to their situation; but he who permits the temptation, endows the tempted with the power of resistance; and he who in vain confidence neglects the use of his armour, cannot when exposed to the weapons of his foes, reasonably expect to escape unhurt. Let not our charity be employed in excusing the profligacy of those, whose iniquitous excesses are in proportion to the liberalities of Providence.

Is not this supposing that gratitude is less due to Heaven from those who have experienced most, than from those who have tasted least of its favours? Does it not imply that those who receive good only at the hand of God, are also intitled to claim the farther privilege of being exempted from the observance of his laws? Too much cannot be said to preserve our minds from that poison of all-virtuous sentiments and maxims, the senseless opinion that greatness divests vice of its deformity. Too true it is, that while the wretch who steals to allay the cravings of hunger, goes unpitied to Tyburn, the gamester who plunders his friends, the profligate who ruins his tradesmen, the landlord that spreads poverty through the houses of his tenants, shall meet with countenance, and find exculpators, and even apologists of their iniquities. But are the temptations that lead them into these wicked courses, greater than those that assail individuals of inferior rank? I hope you will not suffer your judgement to be perverted into an acquiescence to so false a notion. Remember that in the paths of humble life, no fewer snares are laid for the purposes of seduction. Are the sufferings of indigence no trial of integrity, and are there no vicious pleasures to entice the thoughtless and the imprudent? Reflect on this, nor seek to



indemnify yourself for excess of candour to the great, by excess of severity to the failings of the lower classes. When you hear it openly asserted, or what more frequently happens, insidiously implied, that licentiousness is the necessary consequence of great fortune, recollect the life and death of him you now lament. You must feel conviction that the premises are false, and you cannot then be seduced to admit the conclusion; which must be, that there are situations in life wherein vice is unavoidable, and the practice of it leaves no stain on the vicious. As titles cannot ennoble meanness, neither can exalted patronage dignify iniquity.

That great fortunes may be enjoyed in the performance of every thing that is laudable, every thing that religion and morality can dictate, we have many conspicuous proofs. That even in the young this exemplary conduct may be found is no less evident. Mr. E. F—— was born to a splendid fortune; he passed through the usual course of polite education, school, the university, foreign travel; from which he returned untainted with even the coxcombry of young travellers. Nor did he find it necessary to leave behind him the piety which had been early inculcated. As yet he might be supposed under the immediate in-

fluence of his father. But when married, his independance secured not only by his father's liberality, but also by his wife's large fortune, he certainly may, if he acted well at this period of his life, be allowed credit for doing so from inclination. He moved in the first circles of polite life; though ever elegant, not extravagant; though fashionable, not licentious. While the cup of blessing was held full to his lips, while he tasted of it with delight, he remembered the wants of those from whom it was withheld. In every public charity his name appeared. Nor did he employ money only in their support; his personal attendance was freely given, where good might accrue from his exertions. Nor was his purse open to the demands of public charity alone. To him poverty never revealed its sorrows, without finding them relieved. He was the friend of all by whom a friend was wanted. But this was not all he was ordained to teach by his example. Having evinced the force of religion in his blameless enjoyment of life, he was yet to prove its influence in his resignation of it. In the midst of his career, ere he had reached the noon of life, he was attacked by that fever whose violence severed him from mortality. Rich, young, beloved, respected, honoured, the idol of his exulting father's love, himself a parent, the only

surviving parent of an infant daughter, would it be believed that a man of his age, courted as he was by surrounding blessings, could be capable of beholding the fast approach of death with a chearful tranquillity? that his mind should have no regret, but what arose from anticipating his father's suffering, and his daughter's loss? Such however was the temper in which Mr. E. F—— saw his life draw to its early conclusion. In his last hours, he seemed to have risen above mortality, when he acknowledged with unfeigned joy, the certainty he felt of that change, which he was immediately to experience. The simplest relation of such a death, as that which closed the life of Mr. E. F——, were he quite a stranger, could not be heard without sensations that must elevate, refine, and better our minds; sensations which, while they burst into tears of tenderness, excite a wish to have been the happy object that causes in our bosoms such different affections as pity and admiration, and kindle a desire to emulate what we weep to have heard. If a stranger would be thus moved, you are, I trust, much more sensibly affected by the exemplary death of a man allied to you in blood, the acquaintance of your earliest years, one whom you have been accustomed to regard with respect and admiration. To you every circumstance was

as impressive as if it had occurred before your eyes. For as his indisposition deeply interested all around you, so were its vicissitudes listened to with all the anxiety that attends the most lively sensations of hope and fear. You was hourly apprised of every circumstance of his illness, and of every symptom that announced his end; and you heard how he received the intimation. Surely you must feel yourself animated to an urgent desire of emulation, and ardently wish your latter end may be like his: but do not content yourself with wishing. While the loveliness of virtue engages our affections, unless our desire to make it our own be accompanied with active endeavours, our wishes will not bring us one step nearer to the object we admire. Do not be satisfied with a few pathetic exclamations on the magnanimity, the composure, the satisfaction, with which Mr. E. F—— died; but give your mind to inquire whence that magnanimity, that composure, that satisfaction, arose. This will be no very difficult investigation. Mr. E. F—— had a father who set before him an example of all he wished his son to be. The son was not too proud to transcribe in his own mind and manners a copy of this respectable original. Swayed by so bright an example, strive with an effective zeal to become the successful copy of so ex-



cellent an original, by emulating the virtues that rendered his life useful and amiable, and his death tranquil and easy, and secured him a futurity of happiness.

If there is pleasure in reading a detail of such scenes, what must be the gratulations of a mind fraught with that consciousness of a well-spent life, which enables it to meet death in confidence of those rewards that are promised to virtue? St. Paul was a striking instance of this steady courage and confidence. In his epistle to Timothy, written shortly before his death, he explains the grounds of his hope and firmness. "I am now ready to be offered, says he, (after urging his pupil to a right discharge of the ministry) and the time of my departure is at hand: but there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day." If you attend to your feelings, you will find that no image impresses more horror on the mind, than that of a being shuddering on the brink of eternity; it is such who feel that the sting of death is sin. Contrast with such a situation the last moments of a life of virtue; and compare the horror you felt, with the delight accompanying the contemplation of the latter scene. Here no terrors appal the imagination, the assurance of death is

received with the composure of pious resignation, the magnanimity of conscious rectitude, and with humble confidence in the divine mercy. If we can feel such opposite sensations on the ideal review of such opposite scenes, what must our feelings be, were either case our own? In the one anxiety and dread, to which no other agony bears any proportion, and in the other acquiescence and serenity, beyond what we can imagine. What is there in the enjoyments of a sinful life, worth the risk of such misery in death, when we seriously look to that futurity, the apprehension of which is so horrid!

Unless we frequently convert our attention to such important subjects as those of our present reflections, it is much to be feared, that at the moment we are parting from this world, our minds would be alive only to the retrospect of those transient gratifications, which we are no longer to enjoy, and must now unavailingly regret. Should it then be remembered, that an unqualified attachment to the things of this world detaches us from God, should this awful truth strike its first conviction on the mind, in that hour which takes away the power of rendering such knowledge useful, is it to be wondered, that a person who has loitered time, wasted health, and dissipated

talents; in frivolous or in criminal pursuits, should behold with agony the impending hour that closes the account he is about to render? Should no recollection of guilty deeds arise to terrify the mind, still the long-neglected admonition, which annexes responsibility to the minutest transactions of our lives, may well be supposed to raise an alarm in the imagination unused to such reflections, and excite in the trembling soul a dread at the appearance of death, and a desire to obtain a prolongation of life for the purposes of repentance and atonement.

What must be the anguish of that mind which thus vainly supplicates for what the body's approaching dissolution inexorably denies? An anguish in idea so dreadful, that I humbly hope neither you nor I may ever experience a stronger impression of it, than is sufficient to deter us from hazarding to make so terrible a case our own. In order to avoid it, let us, conformably to the injunction of our divine instructor, be careful to work while it is day, for the night cometh, when no man can work: let us seriously contemplate that gloomy night, and duly prepare ourselves for that morning to which we shall arise from its darkness. Let us in the spirit of vigilance, consider each day as if it might prove our

last. This will effectually fit us to obey without fear the summons to depart from this life, however suddenly they may be issued, and to cherish a well-founded expectation, that the hereafter into which we are entering will prove a state of felicity.



*On Pride as inimical to the milder Virtues, and  
destructive of amiable Affections.*

**T**HERE are sown in every mind the seed of many a pernicious quality, which, if suffered to mature, inevitably destroy that sensibility which is the source of every amiable affection, and is essentially necessary to the existence of the milder virtues, by refining our minds at the same time that it awakens the activity of every benevolent principle. Among these noxious qualities none, perhaps, is more destructive of humane sensations than pride, which by lessening our regard for others, loosens the bonds of amity and concord between individuals, and tends naturally to ingender malevolence and strife. For these reasons, this frequent and unhappy blemish in the human character deserves a serious investigation.

Pride in a greater or lesser degree is almost a universal passion: the dominion it exercises over the human mind, is more general and more absolute, than may be ascribed to any other principle of equally blameable tendency. To inquire what are the symptoms by which it is known, and to learn the me-

thods of removing or subduing this odious passion, is therefore highly expedient. I do not know that creature living, however conscious of its own imperfections, however in principle submitted to the will of its creator and governor, that is not in some unguarded moment, surprized and misled by this insidious foe to human peace and happiness. Which is the quality too insignificant, which is the merit too slender, or the degree of distinction too small (in the opinion of their possessors) to countenance the pride resulting from self partiality? Nothing more ingenious than pride in magnifying the most trifling qualifications, nor more active in seizing the minutest advantage to favour its pretensions. It blinds us to our weaknesses, and often represents them as virtues: by overrating our worth, we actually lessen our real desert; and by claiming undue respect, we expose ourselves to contempt: such are the general consequences of indulging in pride. In order to oppose them effectually, we must examine the degree of influence which it may have obtained over our own minds, together with our propensity to indulge it.

Both that influence and propensity arise from our reluctance to admit the evidence of any judgement of ourselves less partial than

our own. Though every person of our acquaintance may be competent to pronounce with certainty on our various pretensions, yet, as their decisions might be too unpleasant to obtain credit from a mind already prepossessed by contrary opinions, we are more ready to dispute the judgement, or suspect the candour of our friends, than to yield assent to our own condemnation. To this self-partiality, it is well known that every human being is more or less naturally prone. We need not, however, blush to acknowledge, that we are constituted with numberless imperfections; nor yet should we presume to murmur at our infirmities, since it has pleased our Maker to teach us a religion that enables us to cure them, and that encourages us in this salutary work by a prospect of the noblest rewards. True it is, that self-partiality raises impediments in the way of our improvement; yet be it remembered, that the same principle under a right direction, is often the most powerful stimulus of extensive benevolence, of arduous exertion, and of generous enterprize. We ought not then to be discouraged by our imperfections: we are not indeed willing to quarrel with ourselves on the equivocal testimony of any person's opinion, and may sometimes be perverse in rejecting the evidence even of those who are most willing to favour

us. Yet, if when self-convicted of our faults, we chearfully submit to the toil of correcting them, we cannot fail of success. Let us therefore resolve to examine our own minds with the most critical exactness; and let us individually be prompted to such an examination, by reflecting that we owe it not less to ourselves, than to society at large.

In order to facilitate our progress in the proposed examination, we should collect into one point of view, some of the most characteristic operations and effects of the evil quality we are seeking to detect. By bringing every suspected act of the mind, together with its consequences, to an impartial trial, we shall be able to discover what share pride has had in producing them; and shall thence be induced, if we have the sense to despise self-illusion and flattery, the genuine causes of pride, to oppose their progress, and radically to expel them.

Various are the forms that pride assumes to ingratiate itself to our feelings and perceptions. It may truly be called the Proteus of vices, as it puts on so many different appearances, according to the divers objects it has in view. Pride, when heated by ambition, swells into haughtiness, and will even look down with scorn upon humble virtue. Some-



times it will crouch with the most abject baseness, when to fawn and flatter, seem the only means to obtain its end. It is found acting indiscriminately under the variegated mask of humility, generosity, or friendship. It glows into anger, or darkens into gloomy silence. It is sickened with envy, or elated with malignant triumph, as occasions call forth its latent features.

A peculiar species of pride seems to characterise various times and nations: the Scriptures have described in a masterly style its effects on mankind of old; and the influence it has exercised, through local circumstances, on the morals and manners of men, has been remarkable,

A characteristical pride, for instance, is clearly exemplified in the conduct and manners of the antient Israelites, as they are portrayed by their own historians; and strikes forcibly the mind of every person who reads the Bible with due attention. The effects of pride on them, was to deaden their sensibility. We find that pride is uniformly held out in the historical books of the Old Testament, as the parent of that obduracy which produced the reiterated disobedience of the Jewish people. The prophets agree with the

historians, in ascribing the sins against which they denounce vengeance, to the same vice; of which "hardness of heart" is frequently particularized as one of the lamented consequences.

It would be superfluous to adduce quotations in proof of the characteristic fault of a people, now humbled to a condition regarded with contempt, the justice of whose chastisement no one denies, and the severity of whose fate few Christians commiserate. The use I mean to derive from a reference to their history in this place, is to establish a conviction, that pride destroys those feelings which are essential to the practice of every duty religious or social; as such a conviction must induce "every well-disposed mind to resist a vice so "strikingly heinous in its consequences."

If national pride is so odious to Heaven, as to have drawn the heaviest punishments on a people it had peculiarly favoured, let not individuals guilty of the same offence, promise themselves an exemption. The Scriptures have declared by the mouth of Isaiah, that "the lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of man shall be bowed down."

These menaces have been sufficiently veri-

fied in the fate of individuals. An awful instance of the punishment of pride is found in the life of Haman, as it is recorded in the book of Esther. The various characters in this well-known history are engaged in a scene of action, too complicated for a minute repetition here: but from the contemplation of them as there delineated, a terrible warning is held out to the proud and haughty. We see in Haman, how little satisfaction is produced by wealth and honours, when they are accompanied with pride and arrogance; and we thence are taught how much at enmity with human happiness that principle must be, which induces man to erect his own prosperity on the depression of others.

This baneful principle has the direst tendency to render the soul unfeeling and ferocious. It had extinguished all sympathy and generosity in the mind of Haman, and had filled his callous and ungrateful heart with the most atrocious designs against the man who had preserved his sovereign and benefactor from the swords of assassins. His behaviour to Esther, at the moment she declared herself one of that nation he had sought to extirpate, and became the revealer of his guilt, affords, when contrasted with the deportment of Mordecai, a striking proof of the

real dignity of conscious rectitude, and how unlike the fictitious counterfeit assumed by haughtiness and ambition.

From the story of Haman lessons may be learned, which we may all bring home to our own bosoms. We have not all indeed the opportunity of intriguing for the favour of Princes, nor are we under the temptation to gratify hatred against an unfortunate people, by plotting their ruin; yet, we are all Hamans in some degree, one way or another, if like him, we suffer pride to take possession of our minds. His crimes, indeed, are possible to few; but we are all within the verge of similar folly, and consequently may expose ourselves to similar disquiet and unhappiness of mind. The insignificance of the objects pursued by the proud in the vales of privacy, may keep the absurdity of the pursuers below popular notice, and shroud them from public scorn; yet even there, projects may be formed and desires indulged, which by their inordinacy, may be rendered little less troublesome to the bosoms they inhabit, than were those of that haughty favourite, who declared, after enumerating the blessings and distinctions by which he was raised above every subject of the Assyrian empire, "all these things avail me nothing, while Mor-



“decai the Jew sitteth in the King’s gate.”

How much ought this confession to lower our estimation of external grandeur, when divested of internal worth! How loudly does it pronounce the loss sustained by those infatuated mortals, who barter virtue for worldly greatness!

Let us now turn from this comfortless picture of iniquitous pride, and attend to that model of moderation in the midst of power and grandeur, exhibited in the behaviour of the man after God’s own heart. No man ever acted with more propriety, either in the lower or in the higher stations of life. His words and his actions were equally instructive: his conduct was mild and wholly free from arrogance, and the maxims he aims chiefly to inculcate, are those of meekness and humility. From the Psalms of David, it is evident, that he considered pride as destructive of all the humane and moral sentiments, and as an indubitable sign of preeminent wickedness: his judgement on this as well as on other matters, was founded upon long and continual experience. David was a man deeply read in the human heart, and thoroughly acquainted with the passions that agitate mankind. The vicissitudes of fortune had afforded him extraordinary opportunities of studying the dis-

positions and characters of individuals in all situations, and we may confidently rely on his knowledge of the world; hardly any man having gone through scenes more changeful and diversified.

A short sketch of this extraordinary character may not here be out of place; as it will, by showing the benefits arising from moderation, serve to check any unhappy propensity to pride. Through various conditions and trials he had passed from the cottage to the throne. We are first made acquainted with him when a shepherd boy, eminently skilful in playing on the harp, and remarkable for his intrepidity. He then becomes a soldier, and by a chain of uncommon events, a court favourite. We next behold him a fugitive proscribed by Saul, to whom he had preserved empire, and whose life he had spared, when it was in his power to have taken it away, in revenge for ill treatment. After suffering many hardships, and overcoming many dangers, he is raised at last to dignity and glory, elected King by the applauding voice of an admiring people, and approved by God. Here we see him first, happy in his family and friends, a successful warrior, every where crowned with victory, esteemed, honoured, and obeyed: and then "old and gray-headed,"

an exile from his imperial city, loaded with reproach and ignominy, while he is flying from his revolted subjects, headed by his rebellious, but darling son. Again we see him a King, brought back in triumph by the fickle multitude, and peaceably re-established on his throne.

In the course of these manifold changes of fortune, every page of that mysterious volume, the human mind, must have been laid open to his perusal; and he was not a man to shut his eyes to instruction. He possessed talents in as eminent a degree as he enjoyed opportunities for their exertion, and his mind was no less fraught with knowledge and genius, than his life was replete with activity. The generosity of his sentiments and his conciliating manners, endeared him to all persons of probity and elegant feelings. His lamentation for Jonathan, evinces the sensibility of his heart, while the singularly disinterested attachment of that gallant young Prince to David's person and fortunes, proves that he possessed uncommon powers to engage affection and esteem.

Well did David's conduct after the death of Jonathan, justify that young hero's predilection. When he was established on the

throne of Judah, his first inquiry was, "is there yet any left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake?" This was not a pretence to clemency, with a view of popularity. Mephibosheth, the son of his friend, being presented to him, he soothes and comforts him. "Fear not," says he, "for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul, and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually."

Nor was he less remarkable for the placability of his enmity, than for the constancy of his friendship. Of this many instances occur in the course of his history: one of which is the generous eulogium he pronounced over Saul at the death of that misguided King. Though this was the man who had pursued his life with the most unyielding malignity, who had practised against him every species of perfidy and cruelty, yet his pious and placable temper seemed to have lost the remembrance of that Prince's enmity. He passes over the part of his life which had been filled with violence, and gives him all the praises he merited, when he was the soldier of God, and fought the battles of the holy one of Israel. In the rebellion and death



of Absalom, David appears most respectable in the dignity of pious fortitude, most amiable in the clemency of a tender parent. When his friends marched with the scanty bands which had followed their deposed King over Jordan, to meet the armies of Israel, led on by Absalom, David's chief concern was to exhort his officers to be careful of the safety of his son: and this, when that son had committed every enormity of which a son could be guilty against a father, or a subject against his King. Nor does the scene of his tenderness end here. Victory declared for David; but his officers spared not the life of Absalom. The death of this offending Prince, the usurper of his father's throne, the plotter of his father's murder, was so afflictive to that father's heart, that he withdrew from the public eye; and resigned himself in privacy to sorrow, for the ignominious end of a profligate and ungrateful child.

The superiority of his mind to revenge, nay, almost to resentment, was conspicuously proved in the case of Shimei. Here his anger could not be softened by the pleadings of nature, or the suggestions of partiality. Shimei, who had loaded his King with insult, and followed him with imprecations when he fled from Absalom, was one of the first to

meet him with submission and excuses, on his restoration to the regal dignity. David accepted his apologies, and manifested no sentiments of anger, except what were expressed in a short reproof to one of his generals, who urged him to take the life of the despicable parasite. He pardoned the insults offered by Shimei in the hour of his greatest distress; and in a pious resignation to the dispensations of God, remitted, when in power and prosperity, the injuries he had suffered when in danger and affliction. For be it remembered, that every amiable, and every heroic quality of David's mind, was rendered doubly estimable by their union with a piety, the most fervent, the most rational, and the most sincere!

He seems indeed to have been prepared for every extreme of fortune. In calamity, patiently submitting to the hand that chastened him; in prosperity, animated by a lively sense of gratitude for the blessing received.

Respect for truth compels me, however, to observe, that the purity of David's character was in one unfortunate instance most deeply sullied. In the giddy height of power, and the dazzling splendour of grandeur, he unhappily forgot himself, and was guilty of a transgression that has left a woeful stain upon

his memory. This too well-known example of David's frailty and guilt, may be useful to us, however, in various ways, if we consider it in a proper view. We may learn from his sinful weakness, a diffidence of our own strength, which will incline us to recur to that assistance of divine grace, which is promised to all who place their confidence in God. It may teach us, too, lenity towards the errors of our fellow-creatures; and it reminds us of a truth equally honourable and important to Christianity, that its founder was the only being of sinless perfection, that ever appeared in human nature.

The repentance of David was no less signal than his crime had been heinous. When reproved by the Prophet, he made instant acknowledgement of his guilt, and threw himself on the mercy of God, in a spirit of true humility and penitence. The answer of the Prophet to David, on his profession of repentance, teaches us how entirely we may depend on divine clemency, whatever may have been our offences, if we seek for pardon with a real contrition.

I have held your attention, my young friend, to the consideration of this Prince's character, longer than I at first intended, from the

motive of laying before you a striking example of greatness unfulfilled by pride, and of shewing you that this hateful passion much oftener inhabits the bosom of the ignoble and the base, than of those who are truly great.

Another motive was, that no man ever expressed more detestation and contempt for pride, than David has uniformly done in all his writings. He seems, whenever speaking of this vice, to feel peculiar indignation, and to lose no occasion of describing it in the most odious colours. "Him," says he, "that hath an high look and a proud heart, will I not suffer."

Few people will refuse to concur with the psalmist in this declaration. For pride is a vice no one can patiently endure in another, however he may indulge it in himself. But, as to condemn in others those bad qualities we tolerate in our own selves, is to aggravate our faults, and pass sentence of self-condemnation, we have no right to pronounce a proscription of the proud, until we be assured, that we are not of the number so proscribed. Let us unite in abhorring pride; but let our abhorrence be made manifest in our conduct. Let us imitate that discipline, which we learn from the psalmist, he exercised over himself



for the preservation of his humility. "Lord! "I am not high-minded," (says he, in a confessional recommendation of his cause to God; when a false appeal to Heaven, would have been equally fruitless and wicked) "I have "no proud looks, but I refrain my soul, and "keep it low." The precise manner of performing those acts of "refraining the soul" and "keeping it low or humble," each person must prescribe to himself. We best know which are those objects that operate most powerfully to fill us with self-conceit, and to produce those undue elations of spirit, which betray us into haughtiness, arrogance, or insensibility.

Among the amiable affections of the human mind, those which tend to promote devotion are surely of the highest order, and of the utmost importance to virtue and happiness. Whatever, therefore, may weaken or oppose the operation of such affections, should, as essentially prejudicial to our interest, be sedulously avoided. Pride is chiefly to be shunned on this principle, as nothing is more opposite in character, than a haughty and a devotional spirit. The first of these, we know to be of a thankless nature, esteeming all the good it receives, below its deserts, extravagant in expectation, and impatient of disappointment.

That such a spirit must be adverse to gratitude, at enmity with reverence for superior excellence, and incapable of submissive resignation to the disposer of events, no one will deny; and that these sentiments are necessarily essential to devotion, every one must acknowledge; since without gratitude and veneration, for the goodness, and submission to the will of God, a devotional spirit cannot subsist. It is natural therefore to conclude, that such a spirit is incompatible with a haughty one. What I mean by devotion is, that worship of the Deity, which is rendered "in spirit and in truth." A compliance with external forms and religious institutions, may be practised in policy or in fear; but such worship is nothing less than devotion. It is not accompanied by those hopes, and that confidence in the Supreme Being, without which, the soul remains cheerless and forlorn.

Pride is of so baneful a nature, that compassion for the sufferings of our fellow-creatures, with every other tender sentiment, sinks under its malignant influence. A man, however exalted in his own conceptions, will stoop through pride, to accumulate grievances and sorrows on those who are unable to resist his oppression, and whose inferiority of circumstances and incapacity to retaliate injuries he basely rejoices in. Justly hath David affirmed,

that "the wicked in his pride, doth persecute  
"the poor." And the least reflection on  
what may have fallen under our own observa-  
tion, will readily convince us, that meanness,  
injustice, and cruelty, are the natural and al-  
most the necessary consequences of pride.

It is not only in minds subject to strong  
and stormy passions, that pride produces fatal  
effects. It often gains admission to hearts,  
naturally disposed to kindness and benevo-  
lence; and too frequently does it obtain in-  
fluence enough even there, to repress in par-  
ticular instances, the native impulse to can-  
dour and humanity, and to inspire a severity  
very foreign to the innate disposition of the  
mind which it unhappily perverts.

Fortunately, however, where benevolence  
is natural, the austere vices will seldom gain  
an absolute or permanent dominion. The in-  
fluence of pride will, therefore, in such cases,  
be easily counteracted by those, who are aware  
of its tendency to hardness of heart, injustice,  
and barbarity. I can believe that persons of  
very amiable tempers, may inadvertently give  
to pride such a share in the direction of their  
conduct, as to betray them into a contemp-  
tuous behaviour, groundless anger, and un-  
reasonable resentment: even the most gene-

rous and gentle minds may be accidentally seduced through pride, into insolence or injustice: should such offences, however, uniformly recur on every occasion that offered, the person so offending, could not certainly be entitled to generosity and benevolence of disposition. For long, very long, must pride be indulged, before it can obtain power enough over a feeling mind, to inure it to habits of opposition, contention, or arrogance: much less is it likely then, easily to harden a benevolent disposition, or to pervert it into the commission of tyranny, violence, or oppression. It may be fairly concluded, therefore, that habitual pride indicates either a natural or acquired incapability of those affections, which are comprised in the idea we annex to the word humanity. When we reflect that pride in its general effects, operates to the disquiet or disgust, if not to the injury of a fellow-creature, the regret excited by such consequences, in the mind of the person who caused them, must be too painful, were he susceptible of humane sensations, to suffer him to repeat a fault, accompanied by such a repetition of its punishment.

Where I behold great pride, I must suppose some degree of obduracy. As commiseration is naturally awake to the distresses of others, it



cannot cause pain without suffering sorrow: it must therefore be repugnant to the indulgence of a vice, which is so contrary to its nature, and which is capable of adding injury to injury, and violence to violence, regardless of the reproaches of conscience, and deaf to the pleadings of compassion.

What length of time, or what degree of indulgence would enable pride to petrify a susceptible heart, I will not attempt to conjecture. To know that it is possible for any vice to cause such a perversion of nature, is to know the necessity of taking the earliest precautions to prevent its influence over our minds. Let not the young believe, because their benevolent affections are alive and active, that their minds are invulnerable to the attacks of this heart-perverting vice. Let them know, that it is not in youth we experience the full extent of its tyranny. It is only over those of maturer age that it exercises dominion: but however distant the period of its maturity, it will certainly arrive, if we allow it the smallest indulgence; very little being wanted to accelerate its growth, and establish its power. Youth is therefore the season for combating successfully this odious passion, as the impulses of a faulty disposition are then most effectually repressed, and as it is much

easier to resist propensities, than to conquer habits; especially those which tend to produce hardness of heart, and severity of manners. Pride being of the latter description, we cannot oppose its progress at too early a period of life.

A farther examination of the Scriptures, will furnish additional illustrations on this important subject. From the proverbs of Solomon many characteristic traits and delineations of pride might be collected; but the opinions of this inconsistent and apostatizing King, do not obtain from me that ready deference which is due to those of his illustrious father. Born as Solomon was to royalty, reared amidst the seductive flattery of a court, and used to unchanging prosperity through a long reign, he is entitled from the peculiarity of his situation, to much indulgence in the consideration of his faults: yet, I cannot propose him to you (notwithstanding his celebrated wisdom) as a man or a moralist, deserving implicit acquiescence; as the vices of his old age so shamefully contradicted the promise of his earlier years. His apostacy, however, furnishes us with instruction. The dispositions of his youth seem to have been amiable, his talents were unequalled, and his learning and knowledge extraordinary. His

becoming, with such superior advantages, the victim of too great felicity, may well teach caution to the prosperous. But notwithstanding the blemishes of his character, his maxims are still held lessons of profound wisdom.

Of the disadvantages that accrue from indulgence in pride in the pursuit of temporal welfare, Solomon speaks probably from the observations he had made on the rise and fall of many a candidate for grandeur and fortune in the various revolutions of his splendid court. Being the absolute disposer of honours, wealth, and power, he had opportunity of examining the minds of those who aspired to his favour; and he was fully competent to decide, what disposition was most favourable to the attainment and preservation of dignity. From what he knew had been, he tells us what would be the respective consequences of pride and humility; and his sayings uniformly tend to inculcate that "a man's pride shall bring him low, but that honour shall attend the humble in spirit."

Passing over the other canonical books of Scripture, permit me to offer to your consideration some of the very apposite passages on the subject of our inquiry, which are con-

tained in the apocryphal book of Ecclesiasticus.

Jesus, the son of Sirach, though a person to whose history we are strangers, deserves much praise, whether he be considered as the author, or compiler only of that excellent system of pure morality and natural religion, to which his name is prefixed. For so exalted is the spirit of piety, so uniform and extensive the principles of philanthropy, which animate the work he has left to posterity, that every one who peruses it, must be impressed with sentiments very favourable to the person that composed it. We are there presented with many very accurate, though concise, investigations of the operation of the passions, as springs of action, and with conclusions equally judicious on their relative effects upon the general welfare, and individual happiness of mankind.

Pride could not escape the notice of so acute an observer; nor has he failed to speak his opinion of it plainly, both in its origin and consequences. His strictures on this subject, are very properly interspersed with reflections on the immediate and constant influence of a superintending and particular Providence. With a view, apparently, to lesson presump-



tion on temporal distinctions, he begins with acknowledging God to be the sole disposer of all good in the following words: "in the hand of God is the prosperity of man;" to which succeeds as a fundamental maxim, and prefatory to all others, a declaration that, "pride is hateful before God and man." The author then characterises the vice, and analyses it more particularly by saying, "the beginning of pride is, when man departeth from God, and his heart is turned away from his Maker." Thus he implies his opinion of it to be consonant with that of David, in respect to its destructive effects on those sentiments which constitute piety. Effects truly to be dreaded, since piety, when pure and rational, is the immediate source of moral rectitude, the refiner of every propensity, the preserver of every virtue, and the unerring director of right conduct through life. How indispensable a condition to happiness, piety was held by the son of Sirach, is strikingly manifested in numerous passages of his book. They are so convincing and impressive, notwithstanding their unaffected simplicity, that I cannot refrain from giving an insertion to the most leading and prominent, as they not only inculcate that first principle of all wisdom, the fear and reverence of the Deity, but hold forth at the same time

the most useful lessons of humanity to inferiors, and teach the degree of comparative consideration, which is relatively due to internal worth, and external grandeur. "The fear of the Lord," says he, "goeth before the obtaining of authority; but roughness and pride are the losing thereof." "Whether he be rich, noble, or poor, the glory of man is the fear of the Lord." "It is not meet to despise the poor man that hath understanding, neither is it convenient to magnify a sinful man." "Great men and judges, and potentates, shall be honoured; yet, is there none of them greater than he that feareth the Lord."

This benevolent writer seems to have used every argument that could possibly occur to a person living before the Christian revelation was bestowed on mankind, to dissuade his fellow-creatures from the indulgence of a vice of which the consequences are so fatal. To this end, he adds public to private motives, and refers to the revolutions of empires and fall of tyrants: "the Lord," says he, "hath cast down the thrones of proud Princes, and set up the meek in their stead." There are few histories, in fact, that do not afford ample illustration of his text. In that of the

Israelites, the story of Saul and David, are clearly to the purpose.

Another exhortation to avoid pride, joined with a reflection on the mutability of human affairs, is strongly urged in the following words: "boast not of thy rayment and clothing, and "exalt not thyself in the day of honour; for "the ways of the Lord are wonderful, and "his works among men hidden. Many Kings "have sat down on the ground, and one that "was never thought on, has worn a crown."

Elegantly and pathetically as these admonitions are given, they may not seem at first view adapted to the purposes of common life. But we cannot suppose that such important lessons were meant to be confined to any one description of people; and least of all, to that which is designated by the instances alluded to. A teacher of morals would not address himself solely to Princes, to the candidates for the government of Provinces, and the command of armies. These are too small a portion of the human race, to be the exclusive objects of the philanthropic moralist's attention. For the Kings, statesmen, and generals, that have flourished from the deluge to the present moment, may be considered in re-

gard to the rest of mankind, as a few drops of rain to the world of waters.

The universal influence of pride plainly tells us, that the lessons of wisdom which we have seen, are intended for general use and improvement. We all have some favourite point, to the attainment of which we aspire; and if we suffer our wishes to become inordinate in the pursuit, or our pride to increase with our success, we are liable to lose in a moment of insolent exultation, the earnings of years and of our best endeavours. "Pride," says the son of Sirach, "was not made for man;" and after contemplating its character nearly, we shall be ready to exclaim in his emphatic words: "why is earth and ashes proud?" That we should be convinced of the turpitude of any particular disposition, and yet persist in the indulgence of it, is a fact that carries with it a humiliating conviction of human frailty; a conviction that might be supposed to operate as an antidote to the poison, which reduces us to such disgraceful weakness: but we listen to the maxims of wisdom, acknowledge their truth, and then forget them; temptations again assail us; and again we submit to bear the shackles of vice, or to wear the cap of folly. Such instability is hardly to be accounted for; and did we not feel it in



ourselves, we should not believe it possible to rational beings, enlightened by revelation. But there is in pride, on some occasions, an insidious air of dignity that imposes on the understanding, and betrays it into approbation; it next admires, and then imitates. Thus the disease is communicated from one to another; nor are cases of this kind uncommon. Of the existence of such a species of infection, the son of Sirach is careful to bear testimony. "He that hath fellowship with a proud man," says he, "shall be like unto him." The absurdity of submitting to such imitation is the more unpardonable, as the least observation teaches, that superiority may subsist without the least alloy of pride, that deference is never sincere but when voluntary, and is paid with willingness only to those virtues that are practised without arrogating applause; and, that in order to command esteem, we must avoid a supercilious ostentation of our merit.

One of the heaviest grievances deduced from pride, is the ridicule, in which young people are particularly fond of indulging themselves at the cost of others. I have before observed, that great pride is not often found at an early age. Youth is more commonly the season in which vanity reigns with a pretty absolute

sway; and this is a quality, which is considered rather as an object of ridicule, than of serious reprehension. But, it is probable, the son of Sirach made no distinction between two defects which are so nearly allied, and might mean, that species of self-sufficiency, called vanity, when he ascribes to it a practice, which is its usual consequence. "Mockery and reproach," says he, "are from the proud." A propensity to seek diversion in the imperfections of our fellow-creatures, is certainly an argument of great presumption and little feeling. I am sorry to add, that it seems the general failing of the younger members of society, who appear peculiarly prone to the exercise of ridicule or censure.

Young people, especially those in superior stations of life, who think they are qualified by their familiarity with elegance, taste, and fashion, to detect the smallest deviations from these, employ all their powers in criticising the manners, address, or figures, of those who have not enjoyed the same advantages. And it is well, if real infirmities, and irremediable defects, are not sometimes fixed upon as fair objects of sarcasm. The natural presumption of youth, offers some palliation of this offence against good nature; but, if indulged beyond the season, in which that presumption is ex-

cusable, it certainly becomes a weighty transgression. This propensity in youth, is unhappily encouraged by the laugh it excites in those who are not stung by the ridicule that is exercised; and the gaiety which accompanies its follies, gains it absolution of intentional evil, however severely it be felt by those who suffer its lash.

Ridicule may certainly begin in gaiety; but, if indulged by persons of maturer age, it will as certainly end in malignity. If it grow into habit, it renders the person habituated to it, an object of terror. He becomes universally suspected as a spy, and avoided as an enemy. And let it be remembered, that there are few people, who can suspect the enmity of another, without being inimical to those whom they suspect. And it may be fairly said, that in proportion as the sarcasm is painful to the object, and pleasant to the audience, it will, in present or future, be injurious to the happiness or interests of the person who utters it.

There are, indeed, some things which are very proper subjects of ridicule, and some follies that admit of no other remedy; yet, though in such cases the use of ridicule is highly expedient, it is always prudent to

avoid being the person who shall exercise it. There is, however, an essential difference between the sarcasm which is meant to reform, and that which is intended to degrade its object.

I shall conclude these extracts from the author above cited, with a form of petition, which evinces his aversion to pride, and his fear of its influence. "O Lord! father! God of my life!" says the pious suppliant, "give me not a proud look, but turn from thy servant always a haughty mind."

The passages which have been selected, mark too plainly the character of pride, to leave us any doubt of its general turpitude, or of its particular tendency to weaken the most amiable affections of the mind.

The spirit and doctrine of the New Testament bear no less testimony against this odious vice. Pride in every description and every circumstance of its existence, is in direct opposition to the whole tenor of the gospel. We need not look farther than the Prophet's description of that state, to which the Messiah would submit himself for the salvation of man, to be convinced of the iniquity of pride, and the insignificance of the objects which it uses, as spells to fas-



minate our reason. Christ, the mediator between God and man, appeared among those whom he came to save, without any of those external appendages of greatness, by which temporal Princes are distinguished. For (as Isaiah had predicted, ages before his coming) "he was despised and rejected of men, a  
"man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.  
"He was wounded for our transgression, he  
"was bruised for our iniquities, and by his  
"stripes, we are healed."

Can pride ever be excusable in the followers of that master, who thus humbled himself to teach the way of eternal life? The offices which were appointed to this great personage while on earth, are so widely different from those sought and exercised by the proud, that on a bare repetition of them, as enumerated by the same Prophet, we cannot but feel our admiration much lessened, and our desires of those things much moderated, which constitute temporal grandeur.

The doctrine and manners of Christ are in constant opposition to all species of pride. It is so incompatible with the duties, so inconsistent with the spirit and principles of Christianity, that a sagacious Pagan who should receive the knowledge of revealed religion, be-

fore he became acquainted with the manners of its professors, must suppose, that to be proud, and at the same time to be a Christian, were impossible: a supposition founded on the clearest consistency.

Pride is so naturally an object of ridicule as well as of odium, that men are particularly ashamed to confess it the disease of their own minds. We are never at a loss to characterise it, and to describe its effects in the conduct of others. Neighbours, acquaintance, and even friends, are not spared on such occasions; but we are no less industrious in removing all suspicions of pride from our own character, well knowing how heavily the sneers and censures of men fall upon this despicable as well as hateful vice.

While surrounded with the delusive charms of prosperity, it may be difficult for us to discern every latent propensity to arrogate importance, and every tendency to undue elation; and the fault that is difficult of discovery, must also be difficult to correct: but the greater the difficulty, the greater becomes the necessity, as well as the duty of expelling this dangerous inmate from our bosoms. As while he keeps possession, he will set us at enmity with all who feel his influence over our disposition,

it behoves us to part with him in time, and not to wait until adversity compels us to do it in spite of our willingness to retain him.

There are few minds that do not become humble under the pressure of calamity; but the virtue that arises from necessity, has not the merit of that which is voluntary. In parting with our faults, only when we have no longer the means of indulging them, we must forfeit our claim to much of the advantage which might have been expected to accrue from a self-executed reformation. The favour of Heaven is most effectually obtained by making a willing sacrifice of our evil propensities, to religion and virtue; and we are animated to attempt such a sacrifice, by the assurance that no aid will be wanting to that intent, if we have recourse to the protection of that almighty power which controuls all the passions of man. With such assistance, therefore, however powerful may be his propensities to evil, however strengthened by indulgence, and fortified by habit, he may begin the contest with confidence of success. Conformably to this idea, Christ, who was so well acquainted with the infirmities of human nature, commanded his followers "to be perfect, even as their father in Heaven is perfect."

Happily for youth, vicious habits can have gained no very absolute dominion over them. At an early age, it is as unlikely that any vice should be deeply rooted, as it is improbable that any virtue should be firmly established. The business then, is little more than to guard against the intrusions of evil: if there be faulty dispositions to eradicate, little effort to this end is required at that period; and the conquest of every vice, the correction of every defect, and the improvement of every virtue, is no very arduous task at that happy age of flexibility, and easy conversion from prejudice and error, to truth and rectitude.

We will now proceed to mark the various habits and appearances that pride most frequently assumes in the common intercourse of society. Besides the fatal excesses of which it is guilty, when joined with violent passions, and tempted by power to indulgence, there belong to it a diversity of other characters, less dangerous indeed, but only of an inferior degree of turpitude. Some of these characters are acted openly and familiarly, and worn without remorse or shame. Others there are, which are confined with a cautious secrecy to the circles of domestic privacy. One kind or other of these more venial species of pride is discoverable in most of the people we com-



monly meet with. It will be easy therefore to give such slight sketches of their most characteristic features, as may enable us to recognize the originals when presented in action to our view. The circumstances in which I have generally observed pride to challenge without fear, the broad gaze of common observation, are of the following description: an awakened jealousy of equals, accompanied with a restless struggle for preeminence in rank, fortune, and splendour. A supercilious scorn of inferiors; a general contempt for the undistinguished individuals, who constitute the useful part of every community, the strength of every nation, and without whose labours, grandeur would be destitute of its decorations, taste of its elegancies, and fortune insufficient to procure the comforts and conveniencies of life. From this thoughtless arrogance of disposition, proceeds an offensive behaviour that varies according to the temper of individuals. In the bold and determined, it produces an overbearing insolence of manners, a forwardness to take the lead in opinion, a general pretension to every kind of knowledge, a presumption that decides on every question, and an haughty pertinacity in the maintenance of its own prejudices. Persons of this character indulge their propensities at the expence of esteem, affection, and friend-

ship, and at the hazard of all the perils they incur from enmity and malignity, goaded by outrage. For while they depress the humble, and disgust the wise and good, they never fail to excite the resentment of those who have more malevolence than magnanimity, and whose thirst of superiority exceeds their power of attaining it.

In people of timid tempers, pride submits to some degree of restraint, but is the more troublesome to the possessor from its partial concealment. Those who have not the courage to exercise open hostilities with all mankind, seek to obtain by little arts, the pre-eminence they esteem their due. This procures to their equals an officious ostentation of civility, accompanied however with a watchful attention to all the minutiae of ceremony. While they receive from others that incense they expect, they are good humoured and gay; but if one item of respect be omitted, if the place of honour be given to another, if a person lower in rank, presume to any sort of precedence, or chance to obtain from the company more deference and regard, to their gaiety and good humour succeeds a fullen reserve, or a captious petulence. The minds of such people are continually agitated between the flattering hope of gratification,

and the mortifying depression of disappointment. Nothing consequently can be more unequal than the temper of such a person, or more uncertain than the continuance of the present humour; this moment elated with adulation; the next, through failure in some part of ceremony, clouded with dissatisfaction, and stung with resentment. Thus, which ever way pride operates, whether in resolute or in feeble minds, its effects are disgusting, and either excite hatred or contempt. In those who are above disguise, it appears dictatorial and severe, it commands where it should ask, and expects obedience where compliance would be obligation. It esteems a service from one lower in condition, but as the discharge of a duty, and supposes the kindness it receives, to be a bait for greater emolument. But to sum up its character, and to shew its littleness in the midst of high pretensions, it is always ready to receive benefits, though ashamed to acknowledge obligations.

In the feeble-minded, pride assumes a mask even to inferiors. It seeks popularity by condescension, and stoops to the lowest familiarity, if it may in return obtain adulation and homage. Hence the society of ignorance and folly are endeared by the consciousness, that an undisputed superiority may be there en-

joyed : but even there, the proud mind does not escape mortification. Familiarity destroys respect ; and if the inferior forget the distance which rank has placed between him and the condescending superior, if he imply an idea of any thing like equality between them, how will indignation be excited, and self-love afflicted ! Nay, if the sons and daughters of poverty, fail to bow the head or bend the knee before persons of this description, the pain they suffer is as great probably, as they would feel under an injury offered by one, who moved in their own, or in a higher sphere of life. Another of the accompaniments of pride, is a fondness to indulge itself in the severity of censure on the faults of others, or of diffusing its acrimony under the unnatural smile of ridicule. If to these we add that abject homage which pride will pay to greatness, however worthless, we shall have nearly depicted those of its features which the laws of polite society, or the caution of policy, can suffer to appear abroad : but at home, it has other subjects for the exercise of its caprices, and more unbounded latitude for its indulgence. If a person of great pride be at the head of a family, she has opportunity of tormenting every hapless inhabitant of the house over which she presides. Domestics will not, however, long submit to the injustice of un-



feeling insolence; and the trouble and danger attending an incessant change of servants, may operate as a salutary check to violence in this particular. But if the haughty superior have under her influence, a friendless, unresisting dependant, mean enough to bear the lashes of continual insult, rather than undergo the toil of servitude, or brave the terrors of indigence, over such a one a despotism more absolute, a tyranny more arbitrary, may be exercised, than dare be done over servants; who having liberty to choose, and spirit to change their employers, may not in this happy country, be injured with impunity. Nor are the domestics and dependants the only sufferers by the effects of a proud and imperious disposition. Disquiet will spread to every member of the family: the peace of the husband, the children, and even of the guests, will be exposed to perpetual interruption from the sallies of a haughty spirit, when it predominates over her, who may always be from her station, either the dispenser of comfort, or the bane of every pleasure, to all within the verge of her influence.

In a person who has not a family to govern, a dependant to persecute, nor a husband to torment, the effects of pride are not so easily and so certainly recognized, even though it

should reign over the mind with the most absolute power. Where there is no authority, there can be little temptation to acts of tyranny. Where pride is not stimulated by power, it can only break forth in casual paroxysms; these, however, may often chase comfort from the circles of friendship, excite general dislike, and sometimes raise dangerous resentments. But the usual consequence of the offences committed by pride, is its humiliation: the person who in an hour of insolence creates an enemy, as frequently stoops to flattery or falsehood, to engage a partizan; for no people are so much affected by the current opinion of their desert as the proud. Eager therefore for fame, while they neglect the properest means of ensuring it, they will fawn to obtain a verdict in their favour, as a counterpoise to the representations of those whom they have mortified by contempt, or irritated by insult. The composure of a mind thus tossed between undue elevation and counterfeited humility, must necessarily be destroyed, as well as its pretences to worth and dignity; for of these we have no idea unconnected with consistency of conduct, and equanimity of temper: but these are not the attributes of a person who is at once proud and irresolute, who is now vehement in contention for victory, then sullen from defeat, now engaged

in vexatious wrangling, then collected in an haughty scorn of competition, now offending by imperious behaviour or insolent expressions, then stooping to win favour by the little arts of flattery and simulation.

No vice assumes a greater variety of appearances than pride. In a hundred people it will wear an hundred different faces; and in the same person, will at different times be dissimilar: even in characters preeminent for wisdom it produces strange inequalities; at one moment it shall strive to impress reverence on every beholder, by locking up the talents of instruction or entertainment in affected gravity and austere silence; at another, it shall seek admiration by an ill-timed and injudicious display of its powers; now it shall breathe contempt of what others esteem splendid and honourable; then exert itself to shine in that splendour, and to obtain those honours so lately scorned. Thus wisdom is made the sport of those who (had it been humble) must have revered its superiority, and loved its moderation. But there is no greatness, that may not by pride, be rendered an object of contempt even to the vulgar. Pride has a necessary tendency to degrade, as well as to disgust. It is incessantly suggesting actions incongruous with each other, with reason, and

with the station or circumstances of the actor. It induces habits of affectation and insincerity, and through these, destroys the power of obtaining interest in the hearts of others. Hence it is, that in spite of the fairest appearance, no sincere affection or respect is ever paid, how much ever may be shewn, to persons who are stigmatised for their pride.

Of the farther evils to which the proud are peculiarly exposed, I shall only remark the danger of becoming the dupes of two descriptions of people, which are literally the pests of society, flatterers, and tale-bearers. The partiality of a mind filled with one object, and that object self, must be easy of attainment to those who are abject, mean, and servile; that is, to such as can descend so much below integrity, as to flatter folly, offer praise to a darling weakness, applaud wrong, and justify impertinence: for where there is excessive pride, sagacity (which in other respects is essential to a successful flatterer) would be superfluous, and refinement in adulation unnecessary. No flattery is too gross for the coarse appetite of one, whose taste is vitiated by habits of immoderate self-admiration; and the most exaggerated praise cannot be suspected of falsehood, by those who entertain higher notions of their excellence, than any encomium can express.



Praises, however extravagant, only hold out to the proud a mirror that reflects back the most pleasing images of their own minds; the truth of such representations cannot be doubted; the picture is received with complacency, and contemplated with satisfaction; and those who present it, are consequently regarded with confidence and partiality. The influence thus acquired by designing people is obvious, and never fails, it is well known, being exerted at the cost, and often to the great detriment of those over whom it is obtained. But adulators, however pernicious, do not threaten so much mischief, as those busy machinators of evil, who spread discord through the world in the character of tale-bearers. Every member of society is liable to their imposition, but the proud are their certain prey; because the same access to their favour lies open to the tale-bearer, as to the flatterer: but the former having a greater variety of means to secure it, is of consequence the more dangerous of the two.

Pride, ever eager for food, and ever insatiable, creates in the mind a restless eagerness to be informed of the deficiencies of others; thence it has a ready ear for the malignant communications of those who collect the poison of slander, and the whisper of suspicion,

in order to disseminate the one, and proclaim aloud the other. Whether the motive of these industrious collectors, be malevolence alone, or whether it be stimulated by more interested views, they well know how to derive emolument from those, whom pride has rendered subservient to their arts. The methods of conveying the tale, are varied with the motives for which it is communicated; and it is either soothing or irritating, as suits the design of the insidious betrayer. If it be expedient to recommend the wicked and the worthless to favour, then praise is made instrumental to this end; not praise of the objects to be preferred, but only a dextrous insinuation of what is represented as their favourable sentiments of the person addressed. Partiality to ourselves, always renders us lenient to the faults of those, who entertain prejudices in our favour. This perversion of judgement originating in self-love, is lamentably increased by pride, which ever shews things through a very false medium, wherever self is concerned, and renders persons objects of love or of hatred, in proportion as they are impressed with sentiments of our own excellence, or destitute of regard to our supposed merit. This is the grand engine of the tale-bearer; by means of which, he directs the prejudices of the mind to his own purpose. Resentment

is excited by details of strictures, which may have fallen from the lips of those who are quick to feel, and free to declare their sentiments, but who had no unkindness in their hearts; or censures may be falsely imputed to the worthiest and best of friends, which shall raise in the bosom of pride, enmity against those, from whose advice advantage might have been derived, and in whose society virtue might have been improved, and pleasure enjoyed. But when distrust is awakened, a barrier is opposed to every thing, whether useful or agreeable, that can proceed from the suspected person. We avoid those whose opinions of our merits we believe to be derogatory to them, and by the same impulse, we seek that society in which we expect to be received with esteem and admiration. The respective excellencies of our fellow-creatures no longer determine our choice of intimates and associates. Desert is supposed where approbation is found, and faults imputed where dislike is imagined.

Thus through pride may persons of penetration and knowledge, become puppets in the hands of those, who must necessarily be among the most despicable of the human species. By such unqualified advisers their favour is dispensed, and their aversion directed; and they

submit to think and feel, as suits the interests, or accords with the caprices of those, who govern the spring which actuates or restrains their passions.

I hold it prudence to distrust a flatterer; but to shun a tale-bearer, I esteem a duty to myself and to society. We have all pride enough without their instigation, to be extremely tenacious of our own importance, and to be proportionably ingenious in lessening that of our neighbours. We are most of us ready to start into anger at the idea of blame, and apt to think that our resentment, and even aversion, is justly incurred by those, who in our absence have passed strictures on our conduct implicative of censure, while at the same time, assuming the sapience and severity of inquisition, we arraign and condemn the actions of all our acquaintance.

No proof is needed how ill this extreme jealousy of our own reputation agrees with the freedom we indulge in traducing the characters of others. Yet, if we are fond of arrogating the judicial capacity, it were but common justice, to allow to others (who have the same propensities) the liberty of similar gratification. Policy should dictate this toleration, as impatience of blame will not silence the



tongue of slander; nor is resentment of censure any proof of innocence. The natural character of conscious purity, is mild equanimity, and a dignified superiority to unmerited injury. For the mind in a clear sense of its own rectitude, possesses a shield to blunt the keenest shafts of calumny: they may disturb its peace, but cannot wound it; they may rouse indignation, but will not call forth any unbecoming resentment; they may for a time torture sensibility, but they cannot bend the dignity of virtue to take revenge.

Nor should the censure that is undeserved, deter us from perseverance in what is right. Truth in the event, must ever prevail over falsehood. Goodness and integrity, however misrepresented or traduced, will burst through the clouds of enmity and injustice, and finally silence the voice of envy and detraction.

If slander therefore should pursue us, let us preserve our patience conformably to the words of the Apostle, who says, "it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well-doing, than for evil-doing." But if we are conscious of having erred, let us use the censures which are passed on our faults, as incentives to better conduct. Let us hasten to repair the mischief we may have done, and employ the evi-

dence of more perfect rectitude; for the establishment of a good name, and the refutation of those who still might seek to misrepresent us.

In the consciousness of our own weaknesses, let us, no less, on the other hand, shut our ears against flatterers and tale-bearers; lest the one soothe us into folly, and the other sting us into malignity. Let pride on no account, be suffered to assume the tribunal in our minds: it is ever a wretched judge, severe in its decisions on our neighbours, and in cases where self is a party, it is always prejudiced, partial, and willfully blind to disagreeable truths.

After this depiction of the character of pride, which I doubt not you will admit to be consistent with truth, it is clear, that no justification, or excuse of any sort, for the least indulgence of it, can be found, either in the causes that produce it, or in the effects which it occasions. In fact, it is in every case the enemy of happiness; it perverts the understanding, debases the passions, and often proves, in characters naturally sensible and well inclined, the destroyer of wisdom, and the poison of virtue.

That species of pride which is borne by the

world most patiently, seems to be that which is founded on exalted rank, or illustrious birth and antient family. There are other grounds on which the vice may grow to equal magnitude; but they do not, in general estimation, furnish it with any good plea for toleration. The most usual of these untolerated causes are, large fortune, pre-eminent beauty, distinguished accomplishments, and truth compels me to add, mental superiority.

We will consider each of these species separately, and begin with that which is surely most venial, since it meets with greatest lenity from those who have it not.

That sentiment which has obtained the appellation of family pride, is a self-elation arising from the consciousness of dignity, authority, or power, derived from birth, of being allied to, or descended from, those who do or have enjoyed similar distinctions, and from being able to carry back a genealogy to distant ages. Various as are these causes, the sentiment they induce, is nearly the same in every case, where pride is their consequence.

That the mind should derive pleasure from contemplating a long line of ancestry, whose members have exercised authority, or possessed

titles of honour, is not matter of wonder or censure: but that such pleasure should be suffered to grow into infatuation, productive of a conduct reflecting disgrace on the ancestry from which the cause is derived, becomes an evil much to be deplored. When the descendant of an illustrious house, is able to look back on characters, which have been adorned with superior virtue, and to trace his blood from men who have been the benefactors of mankind, the patterns of excellence, the patrons of merit, and the ornaments of society, the exultation that springs from such objects of reflection, can never be blameable, nor dangerous; it is not pride, it is virtue. But unhappily our language sometimes expresses by the same general term, sentiments that do honour to human nature, and sentiments which degrade it. Pride exults not in the merit of those it glories to acknowledge among a boasted ancestry: their real merits are little attended to by a mind occupied with those appendages of honour that catch the gaze of vulgar admiration, and win the tribute of blind homage, the ermined robe, the splendid coronet, the magic ribband, the glittering star, the bloody hand, the armorial shield, the genealogic tree, and the titular distinctions. What a silly catalogue of nothings! might the Republican exclaim, who is proud of



being without them. Are such idle toys of any value to the wise and virtuous? would the supercilious philosopher ask, who professedly holds them in contempt. The cool and dispassionate might think, that as the value of every thing to its possessor, depends upon its right application, if rank be made the parent of pride, it degrades the mind, and is then a real evil; but if, on the contrary, the consciousness of family dignity, produce elevated sentiments, and an ardent desire of imitating great examples, it then becomes the friend of virtue, and the promoter of noble actions.

It must, however, be allowed, that people of distinction, who in the common opinion have the strongest temptations to pride, are those in whom it is most disagreeably felt in its effects.

Those who are called the great, must necessarily be few in comparison of the inferior members of the community to which they belong; whether we confine it to the circle of each individual's personal influence, or extend it to a nation at large, or take in the whole human race. From their distinguished elevation, and the consequent notoriety of all they do, people in high stations may be considered as actors performing the most important parts

in the drama of life, on a stage obvious to all mankind. Those but remotely concerned in the transactions by which the great are occupied, sit coolly as an audience to observe, and to criticise the performance, to blame or praise, to absolve or to condemn, as their reason and their feelings direct their judgement. To this high tribunal, the most exalted and the most powerful of mortal beings are amenable; for by the suffrages of its members, fame is conferred on meritorious actions, and by their censure, vice is branded with infamy, and folly with contempt. The sentence of a people may be partial at first; but time ever establishes it on the basis of strict justice. There are yet other reasons for peculiar circumspection of behaviour in persons of rank. It is not enough that their conduct be such as to secure the approbation of their own conscience. It is particularly incumbent on them to preserve the appearance as well as the reality of a spotless character; for envy is ever watching to detect the errors, and to reveal the faults of those who are placed higher than itself; and each particular vice looks with prying curiosity, to find countenance for its own enormities in the trespasses of the great. It is therefore fond to point out the stain that sullies distinction, in hopes to soften the colour of its own darker infamy. Besides these

considerations, there is another of still greater importance, as it relates to the welfare of society. This is the consequence of example: we all know that the influence of this universal ruler of manners, increases in proportion to the dignity, real or fictitious, of those who possess it. Should the weak and the unwary be seduced from virtue by imitation of their superiors, the errors of such offenders must be an aggravation of those faults, which teach to ignorance the way to vice. Distinction therefore imposes stronger obligations to caution and circumspection on the superior, than is required from the inferior orders of the community. But are caution and circumspection compatible with great pride? If they are not, then is pride a greater evil, when associated with greatness, than it can be in an individual who is lost in the multitude of his equals.

We are next to inquire whether pride of fortune has any better plea for excuse than pride of family. For my own part, I should join the common opinion in this case, and pronounce the last most venial: for the pride of wealth generally produces effects on the mind and manners, that are more odious than the worst of those which arise from pride of family. The former is more frequently the parent of tyranny and oppression than the lat-

ter. Acquired opulence being seldom accompanied and restrained by the refinements of education, inspires a conduct, if not more criminal, at least more exposed to contempt, than that which is found in persons of polite breeding. For surely the man who counts over his treasured thousands, and looks on a wide horizon that hardly bounds his possessions, and who suffers his pride to tell him on the review, that an accumulation of gold and lands, can compensate for an absence of mental or moral worth, surely such a man is much more an object of indignation, than him who thinks himself authorised by the lustre and dignity of his ancestors, to claim humility and reverence from other men.

To superiority of fortune, as to every other kind of superiority, its relative duties are annexed, and a proportionate responsibility. Why has divine wisdom distinguished one individual from another, but for the good of the whole? And surely it is a distinction, that seriously calls for active gratitude. Opulence is a state of agency for Providence; and to concentrate riches in the sole possession and use of those who have acquired them, whether by inheritance or their own exertions, is to take from them the only motive that can render a rational being desirous of their acqui-



tion, the prospect of adding to his own happiness, by associating others to his enjoyments.

The possessors of fortune are proverbially the stewards of Heaven: the most callous and hardened among them, are seldom totally insensible of this truth. In order to keep this happy persuasion alive, and to give it efficiency, it is peculiarly necessary to guard the mind from the touch of that torpedo of its best feelings, pride, and to substitute in its room, that rational humility which levels all the distinctions introduced by human vanity. It is only then we become duly qualified to compassionate the miseries of mankind, and to feel the consciousness, that we are all brethren bound to assist and comfort each other in our afflictions, that our common father will not permit the complaint of the unfortunate to rise unheard, nor the cruelty of oppression to pass unpunished, and that to be proud of the good things of this life, is an insult to indigence, of the basest and most criminal nature, and of which experience often produces the most evident and striking chastisement.

Beauty is sometimes supposed to be the cause of pride, but it is not, I believe, often so; and the sentiment which it produces, never goes beyond that most venial species of pride,

which we call vanity. In men, certainly, personal vanity is always an object of contempt. In women, it is regarded with more indulgence, and rather lamented than blamed. It were always to be wished, that beauty might be free from every circumstance that lessens the pleasure which the contemplation of it is calculated to inspire. The woman who suffers a fine form and a lovely face to render her negligent in the improvement of her mind, is guilty of abusing the bounty of Providence, and depriving her fellow-creatures of the delight that is derived from beholding external beauty, accompanied by moral excellence and mental improvement.

It is needless to inquire if superiority in what are called elegant accomplishments, may be esteemed a justification of any degree of pride. How much it is offensive and disgusting, appears from what passes every day within our observation. Should one of your sex, for instance, be represented as skilled in polite arts, distinguished by the most fashionable talents of the day, and eminently endowed with grace of manners and powers of conversation, if you add, that she arrogates undue importance on account of such advantages, it will be easily observable, that more of contempt than admiration, is raised by the recital.

But what can be urged in excuse of the pride of mental superiority? Of pride in those individuals who are distinguished for their genius and knowledge, and who consequently must know how little reason mortals have to be proud, when they consider the narrow limits of the human understanding, the uncertainty of much of what passes for learning, and how little it conduces to real happiness, unless accompanied by those nobler qualifications of the mind that constitute moral excellence, and without which all intellectual endowments have small weight with mankind.

The truth is, that men of great parts are usually freer from pride than any others. They are sometimes thought proud, but they are only impatient at the presumption of the ignorant, who are always the most forward in obtruding and asserting their opinions.

Men of science must doubtless feel themselves superior to the multitudes that move around them; but it is hard to believe, that the admiration of astonished ignorance, or the unwilling tribute of praise which rival-envy pays, should confer satisfaction upon minds duly impressed with the emptiness and falsehood of such applause. The principal advan-

tage resulting from a capacious mind, is to render men diffident in their abilities, and averse to censure, and to incline them to be moderate in asserting their opinions, and tolerant of those who differ from them.

If pride on account of intellectual superiority, is unjustifiable in men of the most extraordinary abilities, much less is it excusable in female minds; whose acquirements, some very rare cases excepted, fall incomparably short of those that are usually found in men of genius and knowledge, and in whom, nevertheless, the world is always ready to condemn what it calls the pride of wit and learning. To be proud of superficial attainments, argues a degree of imbecility; and ill-grounded pretensions to extraordinary merit, necessarily subjects one to disgust and contempt. Women ought, therefore, to be extremely cautious to avoid any display of self-sufficiency, on account of those improvements that may have fallen to their lot in the course of education, nor to set an overvalue on those portions of science which they have had the good fortune to acquire, by a supercilious disregard of those who have not the same advantage. The mind surely is cultivated with a view to enlarge, to elevate, and to enrich it, in short,



to fit it for the more refined enjoyment, and more liberal communication of happiness. How entirely these laudable ends are frustrated by pride, we may learn in the first instance, by attending to our own sensations, while we act under its influence; and in the second, by observing our own feelings towards those whom it actuates. If pride must be the companion of accomplishments in the female mind, let time roll on unoccupied. Insignificance is preferable to insolence: even voluntary ignorance is more to be esteemed; than that knowledge which produces arrogance.

The result of our inquiries, my young friend, is evidently, that no pre-eminence, whether of rank, fortune, beauty, accomplishments, or talents, nor even a union of them all, can afford any justification or excuse for pride; and that we may confidently say with the son of Sirach, "pride was not made for man." Let us now attend to the terrible sentence pronounced against it by S. Paul.

"Ye see your calling," says the Apostle,  
"how that not many wise men after the flesh,  
"not many mighty, not many noble, are  
"called: but God hath chosen the foolish  
"things of the world to confound the wise;  
Vol. II. G

“and the weak things to overcome the  
“mighty.” Surely, while we read such passages as these, the insignificance of those things which constitute “the pride of life,” must be fully understood. Hence it has been observed, that one might regard as a paradox, the union of pride and Christianity: but such is the inconsistency of some Christians, that they have thought it meritorious to profess themselves proud.

It may be, that the pride which is thus avowed, appears to resemble some virtue or excellence, and is therefore mistaken for the sentiment to which it bears the nearest affinity. Those, it is observable, who proclaim their own pride, do it as prefatory to the recital of some laudable or plausible transaction, and represent it as the motive that influenced their conduct, whether in prompting them to good, or in restraining them from evil: but an acknowledgement of this nature is too visibly dictated by vanity, to merit any other appellation; and is in reality, a flimsy and ridiculous artifice to catch a breath of momentary praise, which those who may bestow it, must quickly perceive is undeserved.

I will conclude these strictures on pride, with a few summary observations on the ne-

cessity of an early opposition to its influence, as hardly any vice steals upon us more imperceptibly to ourselves, and at the same time, more glaringly, as well as offensively, to the perception of others.

Hardness of heart being the necessary effect it produces, and this being the greatest of all blemishes to the human character, you must thence be convinced, with how conscientious a vigilance it is incumbent on you to guard against the approaches of a vice, in its consequences productive of so much evil. The most effectual preservative is, to keep your mind on a due poize, neither stooping to a servile deference to superiors, nor indulging a propensity to look down upon inferiors. Servility to those above us, is generally attended by overbearingness to those below.

In order to maintain this salutary poize, learn betimes to view things in their just light, neither magnifying nor diminishing their value, nor suffering the suggestions of pride to overrate our worth, or to depreciate that of others. The nature of pride is, by dazzling our understanding to pervert our judgement, and so to confound and bewilder reason, as to seduce it into the absurdest errors. By repressing pride in your own bosom, you will

acquire an impartiality of disposition that will enable you to decide with coolness and truth on the merit of others; and prevent you from being guilty of adulation. While you pay proper homage to virtue, you will have the courage to censure vice, as well as the capacity to discern it, not only in the lower, but in the highest classes of life. The great, the rich, the powerful, will not, if undeserving, meet with your applause any more than with your imitation. Reason and religion, will jointly conspire to set you above so debasing an influence, and inspire you with sense to see, and spirit to reprobate wickedness wherever it is found,

By subduing pride in ourselves, we shall in a great measure restrain it in others. To this end, let us carefully render to every one that degree of respect to which we are conscious he is entitled, either by his situation or his personal merit. Let us cheerfully comply with the forms of civility which custom has established. Let us not superciliously refuse to recognize the distinctions sanctioned by the rules of society. Let us freely shew them that exterior and complimentary deference, which long prescription has made their due. But let us not prostitute that internal, heartfelt homage, which is the unalienable right



only of rectitude, of piety, of virtue, to the claims of vanity; the glitter of magnificence, the splendour of fictitious dignity. Let us learn above all, to reverence those qualities of the mind and heart alone, whether in yourself, in those above, or in those below, which you may on the evidence of purity and rectitude of conduct, pronounce to be good and great. But let not even greatness of talents captivate your esteem, unless they are accompanied by corresponding greatness of virtue. A being possessed of superior powers, without superior goodness to direct their application, is more to be feared than respected. Piety and moral excellence are solely entitled to our veneration. Hence a person of unbiaſſed honour and integrity, above the seductions of interest or ambition, or any other criminal propensity, and ready to deny himself any gratification, by which he might endanger his virtue, rich in humanity and benevolence, and exercising them to the utmost of his powers. Such a mind, whether the individual it animated were doomed to sweep a kennel, or destined to sway the reins of empire, is truly great and good; and such a mind only has an indisputable right to the approbation and the applause of mankind. What we admire in others, it is natural we should become ambitious to be admired for ourselves; but let the

objects of our admiration be noble and meritorious, and then ambition becomes a virtue. Let us be ambitious to excel in piety, and all the good works it inspires, to deserve the favour of God, and the esteem of our fellow-creatures. This is ambition that will lead us to the discharge of every duty, and render us useful in our generation; and this only is solid and substantial praise in the estimation of sound reason, to say nothing of that recompence which avails the just and the upright.

*On the Duties of Children to Parents, and the  
Happiness consequent of their Observance.*

THE flattering partiality, my dear friend, which you have shewn to the preceding subjects, has added a very powerful motive to those which rendered me solicitous to complete the remainder of my plan. Hence the unavoidable interruption of it occasioned by my illness, has been a subject of continual regret during the enfeebling vicissitudes of my disorder. In order to lessen this cause of anxiety, and to gratify your expectations as far as I am able, I seize the interval of precarious health which is now allowed me, for the purpose of resuming the thread of my observations on those various duties incumbent on persons of your situation in life, which are to lay the foundation of their future virtues and happiness.

I feel an ardent wish to make some progress in the execution of a plan, which, as it originated in affection, was at first dear to my own heart; and which, as having derived value from your partial estimation, has now risen to importance in my own opinion. But,

short as the time appears, which might be requisite for the accomplishment of this wish, it is more, perhaps, than may be allotted for the remainder of my existence in a mortal state of being. Were this, however, as certain as it is probable, that certainty would animate me to the exertion of my powers until they were exhausted, under a persuasion, that truth receives additional energy even from the weakest of its advocates, when pronounced in such moments and in such circumstances, as naturally enforce every argument advanced in its favour.

The impressions made by the affectionate admonitions of a dying friend, and which fall on the heart while it is softened by tender affliction, are not such as the lighter touch of common occurrences can efface; and long, very long, it is, before they can be worn out even by the obliterating hand of time. Should the sentiments I leave on these pages, be rendered thus permanently impressive on the mind of my friend, I may hope they will prove effective of some advantage; and should they add one principle of energy to her religion or to her morals, that time which shall be employed in their communication, will not have been lent to me in vain. It is without the least affectation that I will venture to



call these my farewell admonitions. To one situated as I am, this is no time for deceit; there can now subsist no motive for temporizing; it is with more than common seriousness that my mind is at this moment affected. The threatening symptoms that still adhere with such obstinacy to my constitution, the frequent relapses which I have suffered, and, above all, that peculiarity of habit which is so adverse to the medicine most efficacious in the cure of disorders similar to mine, concur to persuade me, that my restoration to permanent health is matter of the greatest uncertainty. That this idea is not the chimera of low spirits, or the gloomy suggestion of an imagination prone to throw shades of despondency over the future, my reason is assured on the evidence of many pleasurable sensations which dilate my heart, when contemplating those objects of my earthly prospect, that are illuminated by the faintest rays of hope: though fully sensible how many subjects of well-founded apprehension are opposed to my recovery, yet my mind appreciates with gratitude and satisfaction the various sources of comfort and confidence which are favourable to brighter expectations.

I am perfectly convinced, that if medicine possesses a power adequate to my cure, that

cure will certainly be effected; as all that human science and sagacity, actuated by philanthropy and benevolence can perform, is at this time exerted in my favour.

Nor are my hopes those only which are founded on the approved merit of my physician; I feel myself surrounded by numberless alleviations of sickness, which it does not come within the province or the ability of the greatest professional talents to impart; for the art of medicine does not boast an energy of power sufficient to diffuse over the mind that ease and tranquillity so essential to convalescence; and vainly would often its best specifics be tried on bodily disease, were their healing properties unaided by those soothing attentions which the mental feelings unceasingly solicit. The potion that is administered by a friend, acquires additional efficacy from the hand that gives it, and the sufferer's sense of pain is half subdued by the sympathizing regard of pitying affection. Such is my felicity, that the prescriptions of my physician are more than seconded by the tender care of those who attend me; and much, very much, of my cure (should it be effected) must be ascribed to that preventive solicitude, that active tenderness, that unwearied attention, with which my surrounding friends have watch-

ed over me, throughout the long and lingering paroxysms of my disease. Illness to me has hardly seemed an evil. My slightest wants have been prevented. The expression of my wishes has ever procured to them instant gratification, and seldom have my spirits been suffered to sink even into a momentary depression.

The renovating influence of the blessings here enumerated, has been manifested in the former instances of my recovery, and now it suspends the balance against symptoms indicating mortality. On which side the scale shall finally preponderate, need not here employ a conjecture. Before what I have now written shall come to your hands, every means within the verge of human possibility will have been tried for the preservation of my life; but as every thing human is fallible, Providence may not see good to allow success to the efforts of my friends. If so, to lament, would be fruitless, to repine, impious. Should the final conclusion of their endeavours prove, what is termed, fatal, still to those who may regard with sorrow the early termination of a life, on which the partial estimation of friendship conferred an ideal value, and particularly to those who have anxiously sought to protract the hour of its close, the recollection

of those tender kindnesses which shed ease and comfort over the paths of death, will furnish ample consolation.

♦ I experience the sincerest satisfaction in making this acknowledgement of my obligations; and now I leave the subject, that I may hasten to another, in which my heart is deeply interested, and on which I am, therefore, peculiarly desirous to give you my sentiments.

In the arrangement of the subjects on which I have before addressed you, my young friend, no other rules have been applied, than those dictated by my own heart; and as every suggestion that arises there (in which you are concerned) springs from a tender interest in your welfare, so they uniformly point to one favourite end, your much-desired accomplishment in the virtues and graces which constitute that amiable character, a rational and practical Christian. In obedience to those dictates, I shall now proceed to consider the duty of children to their parents: a duty, which I esteem of dignity and importance, inferior to none that are incumbent on the human species; as on its influence depend the utility and felicity of the nearest connection in nature, and the strength and permanency of the dearest band of society.



When I reflect, my dear friend, how you are circumstanced in regard to the only parent who is spared to you, I am almost persuaded, that every thing I could be desirous to inculcate on your duty to that parent must be unnecessary. But, though sentiments of filial love and gratitude often inspire the most meritorious conduct, yet, if that conduct be not directed by a fixed sense of duty, sentiment alone is but an uncertain guide, variable as the human temper, because subject to all its caprices. However strong, therefore, may be my presumption, that your heart dilates with love, gratitude, esteem, and veneration, for your worthy parent, yet, that confidence, well founded as it is, will not prevent me from warning you of those dangers, which, if not obviated by timely reflection and care, are particularly fatal to youth. The first and principal of the dangers to be apprehended, is one against which sentiment alone must oppose a very insufficient barrier. The object of dread here alluded to, is that monster of ever-varying description, pernicious example. An enemy whose influence can only be repelled by an active sense of conscious duty, whose attacks can only be inflexibly sustained by the fortitude of moral and religious principle. Its infection may be injurious at every period of life; but it is certainly most cruelly de-

structive, when it is diffused over the opening mind of ingenuous, susceptible youth. For then it withers the bloom of native virtue, chills the warm glow of generous sentiments, and checks with the restraint of a false and fastidious shame, every genuine emotion of simple, uncorrupted nature. Young people of the most amiable dispositions, are possibly those who are seduced with the greatest facility into the degrading absurdity of seeking their rule of conduct in the actions of others, rather than drawing it from the dictates of reason, and the precepts of religion; an absurdity, by which all hope of virtuous distinction, of mental dignity, and of permanent satisfaction, is first materially weakened, and at length, wholly destroyed.

Wonder not then, if under a conviction of surrounding mischiefs (whatever may be my confidence in the goodness of your heart) I urge every argument, and use every persuasion of which I am mistress, to confirm your principles of filial duty, to support your sentiments of filial love. In the prosecution of this design, I shall be led to observe, perhaps to condemn some things, to which, as fashion has affixed her name, the world gives credit without suspicion of imposture, and therefore without the test of examination. And

here let me again remind you, that I do not offer you my opinions for your implicit acquiescence. Examine them impartially; examine too the decrees of fashion; and where they appear in opposition to my conclusions, then adopt the one, or submit to the other, as you shall find either deserving of your approbation. Do not yield passive obedience to any custom, or blind assent to any proposition which your reason cannot sanction with its approval. Modest inquiry will preserve your mind from the influence of habits, and the intrusion of errors, which might, if admitted, become injurious to its tranquillity, and subversive of its dignity. If what I shall here advance, have no other effect than engaging you to think on the subject before us with seriousness and attention, my endeavours will not be unsuccessful, as much of what I wish to inculcate, will necessarily result from such reflection.

As a preface to our examination of the various claims which a parent may justly make on a child's affections, we will turn our attention to the earliest stages of their connection, where many of those claims originate; and at the same time, extend a cursory view over the world of created beings, in order to inquire, whether maternal love, which is an

universal principle, finds any correspondent sympathy, established by the same general laws, in the object to which it is directed. If there be no such established sympathy, then we may infer that filial piety, like religious sentiment, is one of the properties that distinguish the species to which we belong, from every inferior order in the scale of existence: and if the capability of filial piety be a peculiar characteristic of our nature, then, without any violent hyperbole, may those minds which have it not, be called inhuman.

Throughout animated nature there are manifest signs of an instinctive tenderness in the parent towards its offspring, hardly more visible and striking in the rational, than in the brute creation. Whether a similar power operate in the offspring, cannot with certainty be determined; but as there are no fixed expressions of such an instinct, it may be presumed that it does not exist. There are, indeed, many reasons for believing that no sensation is felt in those objects that excite a parent's tenderness, similar to that which gives the first impulse to its kindness. One reason for this belief (and which seems very conclusive) is, that such an instinct in the offspring would in all cases be useless, in some prejudicial, as appears from the following considerations.



First, its inutility to rational beings is clearly evident ; because the brute which forsakes its dam, or the bird that leaves its nest, the moment it hath acquired power to provide for self-preservation, could not either benefit the creature who gave it life, or increase its own happiness by a reciprocity of those feelings which were bestowed upon its parent, as a means of insuring a guardian to the infirmities of its offspring, and to its wants a certain relief. The necessity of instinct to rational beings, is precluded by the superior endowments of their nature ; endowments, which enable them to feel their obligations to parental tenderness, in a manner that must create sentiments of energy sufficient to actuate with more than the force of instinctive affection. To them, therefore, instinct would not only be useless but prejudicial ; as to suppose their conduct governed by a blind impulse, and independent of duty, reason, or sentiment, is to make a considerable deduction from their merit, when their actions might entitle them to the praise of virtue. From the same considerations it may be inferred, that the child whose behaviour to a parent is such as to manifest a want of those sentiments we have here supposed peculiar to its nature, renounces its pretensions to feelings of greater sensibility or greater delicacy, than those which belong in

common to every creature that breathes upon the earth.

Your mind may suggest to you a doubt, whether if instinct would be useless to the infant, and a deduction of virtue in maturer age, it be not also derogatory to the merit of maternal tenderness. To remove the cause of such a doubt, I shall endeavour to render more explicit what I have already said on this subject. While infants are so totally helpless, as for the first years of existence we see them to be, they could not render any service to the parent, however strongly urged; and when they have attained to an age, at which reason is competent to judge, and principle to direct, a coercive power operating independent of the will, must lessen the merit of action, by destroying the liberty of choice. But in regard to a parent, the case seems very different, as well on account of the purposes to which instinct is applied, as on that of the very limited period of its power. That it has pleased the author of nature, thus to rule by an involuntary impulse the hearts of beings endued with reason, is very apparent; nor is the good that results from it less easily discerned. For the benefit is not in this, as in many of the decrees of Providence, involved in darkness: the weakest perception, while it con-

contemplates the helpless state of infancy, demanding the constant exertion of parental care, must be competent to see, and to appreciate that goodness which gave to the mind a spring that impels to acts of tenderness, before affection can operate, or sentiment be formed. But it is only during the short period of infant imbecility, that we ought or can ascribe a mother's kindness to instinct; and then, its absolute necessity is so very apparent, that we must adore the mercy which gave it, nor deem its influence a deduction from the merit of the agent it governs; since its power does not extend to the exclusion of any sentiment or affection by which human nature is improved, or human felicity is increased.

Before I attempt to prosecute the proposed examination of a parent's claims upon a child's affections, allow me to make one further observation on the supposition of the child's freedom from the coercion of instinct. That Providence has allowed to its creatures the power of being vicious, ought uniformly to operate as an incentive to ardour in the pursuit of virtue; since the liberty to do wrong certainly constitutes a principal part of the merit of doing right. Therefore, a child's conviction that it is not under the influence of

any compulsive instinct, should excite its ambition to perform its filial duties with more zeal, than the operations of such a power could be expected to produce. Where there is a mind capable of virtue, a heart capable of feeling, the zeal of affection cannot be inactive, the expressions of tenderness will not be restrained. This expectation, sanguine as it may appear, will, I trust, be more than justified by a review of the reasons on which it is founded, as those reasons are the same which prove a parent's title to its offspring's love.

Let us turn our eyes to the first stage of human existence, let us trace its progress, let us observe with attention the gradual accumulation of those bands which are every day strengthening the connection of parent and child; and then, let us inquire if it be possible for a mind that can feel, to neglect or violate such heart-holding ties. The mother watches over her offspring from the hour of its birth, with every preventive and protecting care. To confirm its health, to accelerate its growth, to administer comfort, and to preserve it from pain, she is animated to a thousand tender offices; which, while they attach her own heart more strongly to the object of her attention, secure to herself, at least, its first affections, and constitute the



beginning of that series of obligations, whence arise her claims to the warmest gratitude of maturer age. As years advance, they spread a wider field of action before a parent's view, in which appear new incitements to exertion. The opening mind of youth displays every moment some specimen of the good, or of the evil, which nature has here deposited; and the interesting examination of its contents, awakens in the mother's bosom all the varying sensations of lively hope, and anxious fear. With the tenderest solicitude she observes each look, each word, each motion, and every casual mark, or undesigned expression of love, of anger, or of sorrow: studying thus to learn the temper's native character, she sees the first dawn of every young idea, and is prepared to direct, restrain, and improve them as they rise. Should there be among them some which tend to ill, she gently steals them from the mind, and strives to induce the growth of better thoughts.

These, and such as these, are the favours, which, even in the days of childhood, a mother confers upon her offspring. Were the detail to finish here, enough would be found to justify her claims of gratitude, to sanction her demands of affection. Claims so founded, demands so established, must ever remain

in force, and every sentiment of the heart ought to be ever ready to answer them. The brute that forgets its parent when it no longer needs its aid, acts, as we have already seen, in conformity to the law of its nature, by which alone it is governed. But the being made "little lower than Angels," endued with reason, with power of reflection, who can paint to its imagination the scenes of its childhood, with a mother occupied in the tender labour of her love, and who yet can speak daggers to her heart, and turn upon her an eye of cold indifference or haughty scorn, such a being, degrades the nature of its species, and sinks below the rank assigned it in the scale of being. My mind vainly endeavours to withdraw itself from contemplating the happy, the innocent period of childhood. It is a melancholy reflection, that short as that period is, it too frequently includes all the happiness a parent enjoys in its offspring: it is then, that hope, young and ardent, unchilled by disappointments, and tempered only by an affectionate concern, promises every thing the mind calls good, and looks forward to maturity, as an exercise of every virtue by which the best are dignified, and as a display of every accomplishment in which the most admired excell. Ah! why so fleeting the heart-felt pleasures that this enchanting picture excites! Time,

as he moves along, draws a chastening shade over the brilliant colouring, and too often, with relentless hand blots out the beauties of many a favourite object. Yet, if he but spare the fair forms of truth, piety, and filial love, the heart forgets to sigh after its vanished jewels, and esteems these remaining possessions as a treasure of the highest value. But should he display the gloomy lineament of vice where hope had drawn the blooming aspect of virtue, which is the disappointment, whose sting inflicts a pang of poignancy like this?

From feeling such an anguish, may your heart be ever preserved! and very far, I am confident, will you ever be from exciting it in a mother's bosom. Let us turn from this melancholy anticipation, and pursue our inquiries through the period that succeeds to childhood.

As youth advances to an age of responsibility, sensations not less tender than those which infancy excited, but imbittered with keener anxiety, are awakened in a parent's breast: many an ill, or felt, or feared, is born of every succeeding year. The hidden solicitude of parental fondness is described by the son of Sirach: "the father," says he, "waketh for the daughter when no man

“ knoweth, and the care of her taketh away  
“ sleep:” the mother looks around with alternate joy and dread, on those who seem designed to fix her darling’s fate. In one, she sees a promise of all she wishes in him whom she could rejoice to approve the chosen friend of her daughter’s life; but he may fail to engage that daughter’s heart. In another, dispositions appear, though friendly to goodness, yet mixed with qualities adverse to the permanency of conjugal happiness. In a third, she observes principles of ill omen to piety, and inimical to the lustre of integrity, joined with manners seductively agreeable. Thus is the early part of that period, wherein hope had placed the unallayed pleasures of its own accomplishment, crossed by the restless anxiety of extreme tenderness. Trembling alike for the peace and virtue of her child, the parent looks to the great disposer of events, and recommends to his overruling Providence the protection of both. Happy are those whose habits of pious confidence in God, enable them to wait in tranquil submission the annunciation of his will. A few years remove the causes of a mother’s perturbations, and her child’s connections are made. How great the felicity, should those connections prove such as to compose the agitated passions, and heal the lacerated mind! When the bosom of



filial affection forms such a wish, the accomplishment of its object is rendered indubitable.

Beyond this point, the continuation of a series of maternal favours would not serve to give any stronger illustration of the claims we sought to examine: the opportunities of answering them, become daily less frequent and less important, and the acts of kindness less interesting. There is a probability too, that the obligations from the mother may cease, and circumstances occur, that call upon the heart of the child for payment of the accumulated debt already due. For the unceasing vicissitudes of nature are such, that those years which lead the child to maturity, are sinking the parent to a state little different from infant-imbecility. The mother, perhaps, who was so lately the bestower of every comfort, the promoter of every pleasure her child enjoyed, shall in a few short years, lean upon that child for a return of those tender favours, shall ask, and with reason ask, attentions which are more touching than the respect and deference which the bare letter of duty may prescribe; attentions most soothing and most dear to the feeling mind. It may too, before life shall close, be compelled by infirmity and pain, to demand the care and

solace that such a case will naturally require: and is it not evident from the examination of a mother's claims, that they are sanctioned by the clearest reason, by every principle of gratitude, and seconded by every sentiment of humanity, tenderness, and generosity?

If there be hearts too hard to feel, or too cold to answer such claims, yet, is there not the express command of God to enforce duty, though it cannot create affection? That such commands have been laid upon the human race, none in this country can be ignorant. Few are hardy enough to deny their justice; nor are there many, I suppose, who dare dispute their authority. But ungrateful children are thoughtless, giddy, or presumptuous: they do not with cool malignity steep in mortal poison, the point that pierces a parent's soul; but in thoughtless folly, or in giddy pride, they hurl the dart whose wound is cureless. Many in the frenzy of youthful confidence and vain importance, behave undutifully to evince their independence; as witling infidels are often profanely daring in testimony of a liberal spirit. Some, whose hearts are naturally sensible to every claim of tender obligation, lose their feelings, and forget their duties in the restless whirl of incessant dissipation. Hurried on by an intemperate desire

of pleasure, they hear no voice, but that of their seducer, and submit to no restraints, but those of fashion. Another class (and that decidedly the worst) is composed of the mean, the selfish, and the sordid. Expect no good in the mind corrupted by avarice. Every amiable affection, every noble sentiment decays, where this rancorous weed matures. Grasping at the fortune of their parents, the greedy expectants of their dissolution forfeit the better treasure of their affection. For even parental partiality, though blind to the harsh features of many other filial vices and deficiencies, has not one softening shade to throw over the deformity of a mind distorted by avarice, to hide the depravity of a child, which, lost to the sense of duty, and callous to the delights of tenderness, looks with breathless eagerness to the period, when that life shall be extinguished, whence its own existence was derived. To dwell upon this thought would be highly painful. Let us leave the wretches of this description to the gnawings of their vile impatience, gnawings that are sharpened by the shame that restrains the acknowledgement of them, to the torments of those devices which are the more acute, as they who feel them, feel too their inability to accelerate the moment of their gratification. But for the thoughtless, the

presumptuous, and the dissipated, humanity must have compassion, though justice cannot excuse them. Return, misguided child! Abjure those guilty circles in which thou hast bewildered thy principles, and enervated thy virtue. Turn to those permanent and peaceful joys, those calm delights, which reward the exercise of filial duties, and are inseparable from the offices of filial love. Bend to that drooping, venerable form, whose prime of life was spent in watching over thy youth; pour on that hand which supported thy infant steps, the tears of repentant tenderness; they alone can heal the anguish of a heart that bleeds from thy unkindness, a heart that long hath throbbed with fond anxiety for thee. Return and honour thy father and mother, that thou mayest enjoy the blessings which Almighty God hath given thee, in tranquillity and peace. Such must ever be the suggestions of a benevolent heart, on beholding instances of that filial ingratitude which springs from levity, from vanity, or from folly. The offenders can be viewed in no other light than as the sacrificers of their happiness, as well as of their duty, to a criminal oblivion of the most important and weighty injunctions laid upon human nature, both by reason and religion. But the benevolence that pities their infatuation, will also shudder at



its consequences, at its probable effects on parental feelings : for the human heart knows not, perhaps, a sharper wound than that inflicted by a thankless child ; it is a wound, in comparison of whose anguish, the stab of the assassin must be unfelt. That there should be found amidst the elegance of refinement, the softness of luxury, and the urbanity of polite life, instances of conduct in children towards their parents, at which a barbarian would blush, must seem highly improbable ; and were they less frequent than unhappily they are, they would be with difficulty believed. But common as the object is, glaring ingratitude in children, is still regarded with indignation by all who are free from its contagion ; an indignation tempered, however, by the recollection, that retaliation awaits the heart which melts not at a parent's sorrow. The child may one day become a parent ; that bosom now insensible to another's pain, may be roused to anguish when the grief becomes its own : and how will that grief be aggravated by the reproaches of an awakened conscience, whose voice shall reverberate the sighs that burst unregarded from a more deserving parent ? I say more deserving, because I cannot suppose it possible, that a mind which scorns or neglects filial obligations, can be attentive to the duties of any other relative

connection, unless the character should undergo an extraordinary alteration. Of this, indeed, there is still reason to hope, where its vices are not the result of meanness, or malignity of temper: those that are produced by levity, may be abandoned long before afflictive retaliation arrive; neither is the transition difficult, nor the instances of it, I hope, uncommon: the reflection that vanity has engendered cruelty, must be followed by regret; repentance would succeed to regret, and be productive of reformation; and the penitent child would be restored to its rejoicing parents.

Oh! that every unthinking, disobedient child might, before it were too late, thus atone for the injuries and sorrows experienced through its cruel behaviour, by an afflicted parent.

You cannot entertain the slightest suspicion, my young friend, that this wish was suggested by any conduct of yours. You are conscious that you have no cause to reproach yourself with any serious neglect of your filial duties. But dear as this consciousness must be to your mind, suffer it not to diminish, or deaden the lively sense you must have of the obligations you are under to your parent: a due sense of

these obligations will not only secure your immediate happiness, but prepare for you a fund of sweet gratification, which time and chance can neither exhaust nor destroy. The season which shall offer frequent occasions for the more explicit display of filial attention now presses on; the time of trial is begun: remember that every future action of your life, is to form a part of the happiness or misery of her who gave you existence. I do not suspect your heart, nor have I such an opinion of your understanding as to suppose, that after the age to which you have attained, and sensible as you are of a mother's worth, you will be wilfully remiss in the discharge of your duty: but in this, as in every other case, I wish to see you armed against seduction, the ever-to-be-dreaded seduction of example. For I fear it cannot be with truth affirmed, that the present generation is distinguished by filial respect, or filial attachment; and without these, we must look in vain for that voluntary and heart-paid deference, which is the most acceptable proof and expression of an obedience founded on principle and affection.

The causes of remissness in the discharge of filial duties, are usually the contagion of bad example, and the propensities of an evil

disposition: it is difficult to resist the power of example, and not less, to restrain the violence of vicious inclinations. To the first, every one may be exposed; to the latter every one is liable. The most effectual safeguard against both, will be found in a judicious and enlightened piety. This by the strength of salutary motives, will secure you from the influence of wicked examples, and the force of irregular passions; it will enable you to defeat the endeavours of those who are striving to palliate their own guilt, or are alluring others to participate in their misdemeanors.

You are no stranger to the great importance which the sacred writings annex to filial duty. Manifold and striking are the passages of Scripture, wherein duty to parents is enforced by the strongest commands, and recommended by the promise of the highest rewards.

You need not be informed, that of the commands of the decalogue, regard to parents is the only one (as St. Paul hath remarked) which holds out a recompence. But let me observe, that the promise which is the conditional reward of filial piety, included the highest blessings, and conveyed to the Israelites an assurance of every earthly good. The high estimation in which the possession of



Canaan was held by these people, may be learned from their history, traced back even to the time of Abraham. The promise of this possession had been repeatedly confirmed and renewed through a period of more than four hundred years. Every trying vicissitude in the lives of the Patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, had been endured with a fortitude that sprung from the faith entertained of the divine promise, that either in themselves or in their posterity, they should attain to dominion, to wealth, and to honours, in a land abounding with every natural blessing, and local advantage, together with the peculiar favour of Providence.

This promise had been again renewed to the Israelites, and miracles were working its accomplishment, at the time when God said from the Mount, "honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee." Hence it appears, that no stronger inducement could have been given, than is here employed to insure their attention to parental claims.

But sensible as were the hearts of these people to their temporal interest, yet, were they ever, while they grasped the good, negligent

of the hand that gave it, and of the conditions, whose performance should ensure its continuance. It was necessary, therefore, not only to allure them to duty by promise, but to deter them from the violation of it, by annexing personal punishment to flagrant offences against the authority or feelings of parents.

The penal laws of the Mosaic dispensation in this particular, must appear to us of great severity, though doubtless justified by the circumstances and character of the people to whom they were applicable. From the consideration of these laws, let us turn our attention to the writings of Solomon, in which there are many exhortations to filial duty, and frequent representations of the miseries accruing to parent and child from the violation of it.

This great, but guilty King of Israel, who proved in himself the opposite extremes of vice and virtue, was doubtless a consummate master of the human heart. Solomon was not a mere theorist; experience had laid open to him every spring of human felicity, and of human misery. He was a father; and if we may venture to hazard a judgement of the enjoyments he found in that capacity, from

the character of his inglorious son and successor, we shall not estimate them very highly. However, he certainly knew from his own case, how acutely sensible the feelings of parents must be to the good or ill conduct of their offspring. He has accordingly in many places, very concisely, though pathetically, described their effects; distinguishing the different characters of action by the epithets, *wise* and *foolish*. To animate those who have benevolent minds to a due discharge of their duty, he says, "a wise (or a good) son maketh a glad father." To the same effect, he exclaims, "my son, if thy heart be wise (or virtuous) my heart shall rejoice, even mine." To awaken the tenderness of a generous mind, he says, that "a foolish (or wicked) son is the heaviness of his mother," and that "the father of a fool has no joy." It is evident that Solomon means by a fool, a person of depraved mind, and vicious conduct: for religion, reason, and nature, revolt at the injustice of casting so severe an odium upon mere native incapacity.

Experience also often shews us, that though parents are proudest of those children that have brilliant talents, their tenderest affections seem bestowed upon the gentle, endearing qualities of mildness, tenderness, and do-

cility, even where the understanding is below mediocrity. Compassion may operate fortunately in favour of the last; and compassion is a sentiment much nearer to affection, than admiration is. Hence the parent's satisfaction in a child of inferior talents, with amiable dispositions, may be more real and more tender, than that which the pride of admiration, excited by great abilities, can bestow. To sum up in a few words the opinion of the Royal moralist on this important subject, let us advert to that strongly figurative passage, so powerfully expressive of the indignation which he felt at the conduct of contemptuous and disobedient children. "The eye," says he, "that mocketh his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it."

The author of the book of Ecclesiasticus presents us with a happy delineation of the nature of filial piety. The consequences too of its observance or neglect, he has described with an energy and feeling, that must affect every heart capable of being affected by truth or tenderness. I shall confine myself to the third chapter of Ecclesiasticus, as in that, I think, are passages of instruction, exhortation, persuasion, and warning, superior in their



kinds to any thing that is generally to be met with, even in the best authors.

The chapter alluded to, begins as an address from a father to his children, wherein he solicits their attention to his instructions, that by filial obedience they may ensure their own security; parental authority being, as he informs them, delegated by God. "Hear me your father, O children, and do there-  
"after, that ye may be safe; for the Lord" (he continues) "hath given the father honour  
"over the children, and hath confirmed the  
"authority of the mother over the sons."

He then proceeds to enumerate the benefits that must accrue to the children from the exercises of filial respect and love. "He that  
"honoureth his father, maketh atonement  
"for his sins; and he that honoureth his mother, is as one that layeth up treasure."  
"Whoso honoureth his father, shall have joy  
"of his own children, and when he maketh  
"his prayer, he shall be heard." To these assurances he adds another of more doubtful import, but certainly meant as an implication of great blessing, "he that honoureth  
"his father, shall have long life."

In another passage he affirms, that a person

observant of God, will be affectionate, respectful, and obedient to parents. "He that is obedient to the Lord, will be a comfort to his mother: he that feareth the Lord, will honour his father, and do service to his parents, as to his masters."

It seems to be with great appearance of justice, that this writer has pronounced filial piety the natural concomitant of religious principles; as it would not be a very unfair conclusion to suppose, that persons who could be negligent of duties, so founded, so sanctioned, as are those due to parents, would not feel a very ardent zeal in the service of God, nor their religion be such, as might be presumed acceptable to that being who enjoins reciprocal love as the first of duties, and abhors all hardness of heart. The benefits of parental benediction he has very strongly described, by representing it as a mean of giving permanency to the temporal possessions of the children, and by adding at the same time the fatal effects of a mother's malediction.

"Honour thy father and thy mother," says he, "both in word and in deed, that a blessing may come upon thee from them;" for, continues he, "the blessing of the father esta-

" blissheth the houses of children; but the  
 " curse of the mother rooteth out founda-  
 " tions." To this succeeds an excellent lesson  
 for those senseless young people, who seek in  
 the weaknesses, the infirmities, or the singu-  
 larities of their parents, matter on which to  
 display the licentiousness of ridicule and  
 derision.

" Glory not" (says the preacher) " in the  
 " dishonour of thy father, for thy father's  
 " dishonour is no glory unto thee. The glory  
 " of a man, is from the honour of his father;  
 " and a mother in dishonour, is a reproach  
 " unto the children."

In another passage, replete with the most  
 pathetic and persuasive eloquence, " my  
 " son," says he, " help thy father in his age,  
 " and grieve him not as long as he liveth;  
 " and if his understanding fail, have patience  
 " with him; and despise him not, when thou  
 " art in thy full strength, for the relieving of  
 " thy father shall not be forgotten; and in-  
 " stead of sins, it shall be added to build thee  
 " up: in the days of thy affliction it shall be  
 " remembered, and thy sins shall melt away,  
 " as the ice in the fair-warm weather."

The New Testament is no less cogent in its

injunctions of filial duties. The first instance of this nature that occurs, is the answer given to the young man who inquired "what he should do to be saved?" In resolving this question, Christ lays a remarkable stress on that commandment which enjoins children to honour their parents.

No less remarkable is his reproof of the Jews on their evasion of its performance, and of the penalties annexed to such failure. The Jews of that period, particularly those of the sect of Pharisees, were become absolute bigots to forms and ceremonies; while they neglected at the same time the higher obligations of piety and morality, shielding themselves from the letter of the law, by the pretext of adhering to their traditions. These traditions (of whose observance they were so tenacious, as to be highly scandalized at the disciples of Christ, for eating with unwashed hands) were not, in reality, any part of the Mosaic legislature, but the conclusions, or comments of their doctors or lawyers on particular texts of Scripture: these being handed down from one generation to another, were subject to continual innovations, and unrestrained interpolations of new constructions of the law. As the manners of the Elders became less pure, they (who were the teachers of the people,



and the oracles of the law) might readily suit the commentary to their corruptions; this being an easier task than to regulate their behaviour conformably to the moral precepts of the Scriptures. It is sufficiently apparent from the gospel history, that in the time of Christ, the traditions were observed by religious temporizers, as of equal authority with the written law. By one of these prevaricating expositions, a child who dedicated part of his property to the uses of the temple, (that is, the priesthood) was exonerated from all legal demands of relief from a parent; but how far a mind which could seek to evade an obligation of this kind, would be sensible to natural claims or affections, will not admit of a question. The indignation of Christ at this evasion (which was countenanced by the interested priesthood) drew from him a rebuke, in which is conveyed a clear illustration of the command to "honour parents." Upon an impertinent cavil of the Pharisees, he uttered this sharp interrogatory, "why do ye transgress the commandments of God by your tradition? For God commanded," saying, "honour thy father and thy mother; and he that curseth his father or his mother, let him die the death:" but ye say, "who-soever shall say to his father or his mother, 'it is a gift, (or an offering to the temple) he

"shall be free," that is, he shall be indemnified from the penalty annexed by the law, to neglect, or disregard of parents. "Thus," continues Christ, "ye have made the commandment of God of none effect by your traditions." The importance of the law they had thus endeavoured to render void, is strongly evinced by the vehement reprehension which an attempt so unnatural and base, drew from him in the following words.

"Ye hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophecy of you" saying, "this people draweth nigh unto me with their mouths, and honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men."

The testimony of Christ's submission to parental authority, occurs in the detail of a very early event of his life, which seems to have been recorded by the Evangelist, from the verbal information of Mary his mother, who, we are told, "kept all these sayings in her heart." St. Luke, who is the historian of this circumstance, relates, that when Jesus was twelve years old, he accompanied his parents and relations to Jerusalem, on an errand of religious observance. After the of-

fices of piety had been performed, and the family of Joseph were on the way in their return home, it was discovered, that Jesus was not among his friends. Joseph and Mary went back to the city, and there "sought him" "sorrowing" three days before they could gain any intelligence of him: at length they found him in the temple, engaged with the most learned men of the Jewish nation, in disquisitions of the law. His arguments were supported with a superiority of intelligence and ability, that caused the greatest astonishment in all present. Nor were his parents less surprized, when they beheld him in a situation so unexpected, and engaged in controversy apparently so ill-suited to his age and acquirements. His subsequent conduct conveys a more valuable lesson than volumes could inculcate. From this scene of triumph, where every mind had been impressed with admiration of him, he returned with his parents, a poor carpenter and his wife, to their humble cottage in an obscure village, where "he was subject unto them" (as is implied) to the time of his ministry, which is supposed to have commenced about the thirtieth year of his age.

From this interesting example of filial obedience, let us turn our eyes to that affecting

instance of tender regard to a mother's feelings, which was manifested in the last agonies of his painful death. At that trial of his fortitude, when he rose superior to insult, to fortune, to every cruel effort of human malignity, in the consciousness of his own rectitude, he participated with a truly exalted and godlike pity, in the sorrows which his friends must suffer for his loss: but it was principally to an afflicted mother that his filial compassion was directed. Faithful to the duties of nature, he was earnest to provide a consolation to her distress, and to acquit himself of those obligations which are due from a child to a parent.

Such, my dear young friend, was the conduct of him, whose life was a continual lesson of all that was good, and whose death was the brightest example of the most invincible adherence to the sacred cause of truth. When we see him unreluctantly retiring from the admiration of the learned, to obscurity and subjection, to mean and indigent parents; when we behold him in his last moments chiefly anxious to alleviate the sorrows of a mother whom he had submissively obeyed, and solicitous to supply her with a comforter who could best compensate for the loss she was about to sustain, we have a convincing in-



## CHILDREN TO PARENTS. 141

stance how much filial piety is essential to the perfection of the Christian character.

Many people find a very tender gratification to the heart, in suffering the imagination to draw scenes and personages, of which the subject is virtue triumphant in conscious rectitude. Of these representations, a being who pursues in the most important and interesting relation in nature, a line of conduct, at once conformable to the laws of God, the dictates of reason, the impulses of affection, and the voice of gratitude, affords a subject on which fancy must necessarily delight to expatiate. Such a being is the child, who, strong in principle, warm in affection, and sensible of obligation, lives in habits of filial duty, and loving confidence, with the revered authors of its being: and if only to imagine the sensations of a mind thus constituted, be highly pleasurable, what must be the felicity of those hearts, which are conscious that the reality of these delightful visions is all their own? That this felicity is certainly and easily attainable, is a consideration that affords another subject of most comfortable reflection; for surely it is a felicity, of which the avenues are every where accessible, which solicits the acceptance of all who are not unfortunate enough to see in their parents, persons of de-

praved minds, and profligate manners. This, indeed, is a lamentable obstruction to the discharge of filial obligations. For there cannot, perhaps, be a more severe exercise of piety, morality, and temper, than is found in exigencies, where duty prescribes respect to those whose conduct forbids esteem; where religion commands deference to the will, solicitude for the welfare, and attention to the pleasure of an object who manifests a contempt for duty, a scorn of the ties of nature, and an insensibility to affection: this contempt, this scorn, and this unnatural insensibility, must necessarily strike at the root of tenderness, stifle respect, stimulate resentment, and awaken indignation. What an arduous task must it be, to keep from annihilation the two first when so cruelly attacked, and to restrain the last when so powerfully excited! Yet, such is the burden imposed on a child whose parents are worthless. No situation certainly can be deemed more trying. Those who can retain their filial affection, and perform the duties of children in so deplorable a case, deserve undoubtedly a degree of esteem and praise, which hardly any other moral deed can claim: nor will it seem presumption to add, that as the merit of obedience to his commands, must increase in proportion to the difficulty of rendering it, we are intitled to

hope from the equitable ruler and judge of all things, that no exertions are more acceptable to him, nor productive of greater reward, than the struggles of a dutiful child to overcome by acts of affection and tenderness, the perverse and hard-hearted disposition of a wicked and unnatural parent.

Of all the blessings for which we are indebted to Heaven, none conduce more to our happiness than the virtues of our parents: but we render ourselves unworthy of this blessing, when we become insensible of its importance, and manifest by our conduct, ingratitude and unfeelingness for so great a felicity. True filial love consists in imitating virtuous parents, in studying their example, and guiding ourselves by their precepts. As we naturally copy those we love, how happy must that child be, whose parent commands both affection and esteem! this happiness, supremely desirable to children of both sexes, is peculiarly so to yours, my dear young friend. Such parents, while a daughter continues in a single state, will, it is to be hoped, invariably hold the first and firmest place in her heart. In them prudence will direct her to look for the warm, the tender, the sincere, and active friends. But should the dispensations of Providence deprive her of one of

these loving supports, still she has in the remaining one, especially if a mother, a sufficient fund of consolation. In the bosom of a virtuous mother she can with equal confidence and propriety deposit every care, and find every comfort. To her indulgent wisdom every infirmity may be laid bare, with a certain conviction, that while a mother's council strengthens her weakness, maternal tenderness will save her from the pangs of humiliation. Tranquillity and satisfaction must rest in the mind which is assured, that whatever perplexity may occur to embarrass, fear arise to alarm, or groundless hope to mislead, it has ever near, competent to decide, to encourage, or to direct, a friend, the sincerity of whose affection is indubitable, and whose interest in its happiness, is a principle hardly less lively than that which animates to self-preservation. It is needless to enumerate the advantages resulting from so auspicious a situation: they are usually the causes and forerunners of all the subsequent prosperities of our lives; as they lay the foundation of all that is truly valuable and worthy of our desire in respect of qualities and attainments, and by the prudence which they infuse into our conduct, generally secure the enjoyment of all those worldly blessings that Providence has placed within our reach.



When it has pleased Heaven in its bounty to place in our hands the power of deserv-  
ing and of obtaining such happiness, what is it  
that can make any compensation for its neg-  
lect or its loss? The pleasures, or to give  
them a right name, the dissipations of what  
is called the gay world, will not assuredly re-  
place that serenity of mind which accompa-  
nies the placid enjoyment of domestic com-  
forts, participated with, and under the shel-  
ter and protection of beloved parents.

In our inquiries into the nature of a parent's  
claims on the affections of its offspring, our  
attention has been necessarily held to the ear-  
lier periods of life, as therein are laid the  
foundations of those rights which successive  
obligations further establish and confirm, and  
which religion and reason jointly sanction.  
It seems now equally essential to the comple-  
tion of my design, that our observations should  
be extended to the stages of existence which  
succeed to those we have reviewed.

It is a position, to the truth of which I fear,  
the exceptions are not very numerous, that a  
neglect of filial duty, and an insensibility to  
the demands of filial affection, too generally  
pervade the higher ranks of society in this  
country. That these best and strongest ties

of the heart should be relaxed at a period, when new and inestimable obligations are flowing from the parent to the child, seems hardly credible, especially when it is considered, that the education of youth is regarded with all the respect and interest due to an object of so high importance; that the cultivation of the mind is preferred to accumulation of fortune, that no expence is spared, where the means of the child's improvement can be purchased; and that personal ease, convenience, and self-gratification, are common sacrifices, joyfully offered by parental love, to facilitate, and to assist these laudable purposes. The female mind, in particular, is now cultivated with an assiduity, and a liberality unthought of in times but little antecedent to those in which we live. How far the present method of education is the most eligible for the formation of religious or moral characters, is not the subject to be determined: but this I believe to be an indisputable truth, (and this alone is sufficient for my purpose) that the good of the child excites the most ardent wishes of almost every parent, whatever may be the means employed for its attainment. The diversity of ideas annexed to the word *good*, in the minds of different people, is not less, perhaps, than the diversity of tempers individually received from nature.

Admitting that the term be ill applied, that the safest paths to excellence be overlooked, and that mistakes be made in the choice of this good so universally described, yet, where the design is kindness, error in its execution ought not to cancel obligation. Parental claims still are sacred, and children must find their happiness in regarding them with reverence, in answering them with the promptitude of affection, and the scrupulous punctuality of conscious duty.

Whether such happiness be sought by daughters who have attained that age, when independence of authority, liberty of action, and freedom of will, allow to rectitude of conduct all the dignity of virtue, and give to the faults of insensibility the stain of moral turpitude, is deserving of inquiry. Let us then examine, whether the bands of union between mother and daughter, continue through the supposed period, to be recognized with such gratitude, and acknowledged by such external behaviour, as might be expected to distinguish the nearest connection of nature, and is with reason expected: for in no possible circumstances can we behold without indignation, the violation or neglect of those bands, which we know to have been woven of all the tenderest feelings of the heart, and strength-

ened by all the endearing offices of friendship: such bands ought surely to be impervious to the injuries of time, and to remain unchanged through every vicissitude of life.

We have already, my dear friend, traced from its beginning that series of obligations, which, during the infancy and youth of the child, are every day laying the foundation of new claims, or adding weight to those before established upon its duty, its gratitude, or its love. These periods past, what succeeds? While the daughter remains single, the countenance and protection of her mother is rendered by the institutes of polite society, indispensably necessary to her participation of its amusements. The salutary custom which forbids a young unmarried woman to meet the public eye, unsanctioned by a matron's presence, prolongs the term of maternal influence, by barring the avenues of pleasure against the entrance of her who is not accompanied by such as are to protect her character, and guard her youth and inexperience with the caution of mature age. Thus far there can be nothing greatly to apprehend, because there can be little opportunity of much to censure. When that sudden liberation takes place, which a woman, however young, however thoughtless, receives by mar-



riage, from the necessity of a female protection, though it may, like every other species of freedom, be sometimes abused, yet does it give to the agent the merit of action, and therefore may be the means of deserving higher praise: but how often does it prove a fatal liberty? We will suppose the daughter married, and that necessity of a mother's presence, which is imposed by custom, done away. Now has the daughter an opportunity of manifesting whether her mother's society was sought as a matter of convenience, or whether desired from the motives of duty and affection? If from the latter, how highly will both be gratified by the proof! She who gives it, will hardly feel less pleasure than is communicated to her who exults in the certainty of her own happiness, founded on her offspring's love.

During the first years of a married state, fashion demands (nor can reason disapprove her claims) a greater display of gaiety, of elegance, of splendour, and festivity, than at any other period, or in any other circumstances of life. The pleasures of this season, a parent feels not a wish to see restrained to stricter limits than those which innocence and propriety prescribe.

She joins in the smiling circles, and more than shares in the satisfaction which seems to light up every eye; for she wears in her heart the reality of that delight, whose semblance is but imperfectly portrayed on the countenances of those who surround her. Her maternal affection is not lessened by the admittance of a new object to partake of it; she regards with an interest almost equally lively, her daughter, and the husband of her daughter's choice; and her happiness is increased as she contributes to that of her children. The same sentiments which animate a mother to promote with the warmest zeal her children's pleasure, to sympathize with the truest tenderness in her children's welfare, render her also more than any other person, the partial admirer of their virtues, the indulgent apologist of their errors, and the kindest friend to all their interests. From the advice of a counsellor, whose experience furnishes the power, and whose affection supplies the desire of pointing out the safest and surest methods of acting with propriety in their new situation, what numberless advantages may youth derive! How much of security from the dangers to which (on their first entering paths untried before) youth are liable! In what circumstances can the want of counsel be so urgent, as in those which press around the en-

trance of a station that calls at once for the exertions of prudence, the decisions of judgment, the display of taste, and the exact discharge of those various demands which a critical world is so ready to make and to enforce, especially on those who are newly become its members?

Inconveniences of many descriptions will doubtless be obviated, by those who can derive from the advice of others, the fruits of an experience which might otherwise be purchased at a heavy cost, and in some cases, perhaps, at the hazard of principles. Young people, on whom are newly devolved the management of their own fortunes, the arrangement of suitable establishments, the care of conducting a family, the necessity of supporting with proper dignity the honours of their house, must, from a sense of the different kinds of responsibility, imposed by each incumbent duty, feel a wish for the counsel of those who have with dignity and consistency trodden before them the paths which it is now their turn to pursue. From whom can advice be asked with so much certainty of advantage, as from a parent? Or what opinions can be relied upon with so much confidence, as those which are given by a friend, whose heart cannot feel any motive to deceive, or to

mislead, since its own happiness depends on the conduct of those who solicit counsel? Surely the singular utility, at such a period, of the connection between parent and child, is a manifest reason for drawing more closely than ever the bands of their union.

It may be supposed that the above considerations imply an idea of extending parental authority beyond that age, when the children are competent to assume the independence of free agents. Nothing can be farther from my mind than such a sentiment. A parent's anxiety renders a parent's heart feelingly sensible to every thing which concerns the welfare of a child: but no one, that is possessed of good sense, and liberality of sentiment, will be fond to exercise authority, where it is not compelled by the express letter of some known duty; and where the exertions of it are thus unavoidable, they will be made with reluctance, and the cause regarded with sorrow. Nor will such parents (except urged by impending evil) press their advice beyond the point where its utility is felt, and its influence desired by those for whose good it is intended. The giving advice, if seriously considered, is not an honour to be too eagerly desired; though to do it, may sooth vanity, and gratify self-importance. Those who know



the value of tranquillity, will not officiously assume a direction of others, which must extend to the sphere of their own responsibility, if not to the world yet, where it more nearly concerns their peace, to Heaven and to their own conscience. People who have this conviction, will ever be slow to intrude advice, whatever may be the relation in which they stand to those whose conduct seems to want direction; and when it is sought, it will be yielded as the discharge of a duty, and expressed with the diffidence of conscious fallibility. The feelings of parents, indeed, may urge them beyond the caution of colder minds: but, in such cases, the goodness of the motives should preponderate, and command gratitude, whatever the consequences resulting from their advice.

In recommending deference to a parent's counsel, I make no allusion to a parent's authority, as I think the virtue which is compelled, hardly deserves the name of virtue, and that the conduct which is not free, can never be highly meritorious. I mean nothing less, therefore, than the authority of a master, and the servility of a slave, when I speak of the advantages a child must derive from a parent's experience. When I endeavour to describe the blessings dependent on the duration

of a parent's influence, my imagination sees (however imperfect may be my expressions) every good which can arise from the nearest and dearest friendship. When I attempt to enumerate the pleasures that would flow from sentiments of affection, mutually felt, and mutually followed, I conceive a series of enjoyments formed to constitute as much felicity, as may be consistent with human imperfection. And when I say, that safety from many a danger would be found in a parent's advice, I entertain no idea of any dependence or humiliation annexed to the requisition or adoption of a parent's opinions.

The necessity of a parent's advice to a young-married woman, may, perhaps, be deemed precluded by the counsels of her husband, who is become by marriage, the guide and protector of her future life. I do not mean to elevate one duty on the ruins of another. That the husband's claims upon the affection, deference, and obedience of his wife, take place of every other obligation, except those to God, no one can presume to deny. But between husband and wife, I cannot, even in idea, suppose a separation of interests, without including the destruction of their reciprocal happiness. It may be said, with few exceptions, that nothing is a benefit to one which is not a be-

nefit to both. To supersede by any other influence one particle of that which belongs to the husband, to induce any observance, even of a parent, that must entrench upon his just prerogatives, would be highly dangerous to the most important interests of every party concerned. The advice which I suppose salutary to the wife, can hardly prove so, if the husband do not comprehend its utility, and approve its design. To both, therefore, must it be acceptable, or it cannot be of material service to either. But the fact is, that many matrimonial engagements are entered into when both parties are young: and what person without experience, whether man or woman, is competent to decide in all the exigencies of a conspicuous, a gay, and perhaps a dissipated course of life? To say nothing of family œconomy (which may not, however, be neglected by the most opulent, without consequent evil) there may, upon the most trifling occasions, difficulties arise, which how to obviate, or to avoid, a young man may be as little able to determine as his wife: and yet awkwardness or ignorance in encountering embarrassments, may be prejudicial to their characters, however deserving in other respects. Would any man, therefore, from a childish tenaciousness of his own exclusive influence, object to his wife's availing herself

of a mother's experience, to learn the best method of extricating herself from perplexity, and preserving her conduct from censure? It may be answered in the negative with certainty; and with equal certainty it may be affirmed, that no man of sense would wish to detach the woman of his choice, from her parent's counsel, and her parent's society: there have been, I should suppose, but few instances, wherein a married daughter's neglect of her mother, was really imputable to the influence of the husband. For seldom will the child that is capable of slighting parental ties, be scrupulously observant of her conjugal engagements: rather, in truth, to pride or insensibility must be imputed the defects in filial piety, than to the observance of other duties.

But to the asking advice, there is certainly annexed a tacit acknowledgement of superiority in the person from whom it is required; and the idea of submitting to another the direction of our conduct, is sometimes accompanied by that of an humiliation, which a haughty spirit can hardly brook. When a daughter is unfortunate enough to consider a deference to her mother's judgement, as degrading to the credit of her own, she will not be very solicitous to avail herself of its



decisions. Her mind will naturally feel repugnance to an act which it deems derogatory to self-importance, and which, if performed, is productive of sensations that are painful to vanity, and adverse to the elatedness too frequently attendant on the consciousness of independence. The necessary consequence of such a frame of mind must, however, be truly unhappy. The mother's fond anxiety will be regarded rather as the severity of a rigid censor, than as the apprehensions of a tender friend. Her advice, instead of being solicited, as a measure of propriety, will be shunned, as the vehicle of an insidious snare to her daughter's freedom, and of shackles to restrain her inclinations. Now should they unhappily prove of a dangerous tendency, a mother's eye will be thought expressive of reproof, and the language of admonition be acceptable. In such circumstances a dissolution of intimacy must soon take place between two persons, upon whose perfect and permanent union depended the happiness of one party, and the safety of the other. But the evils which must accrue to the child from such an event, are not feared by her till they are felt; and are not felt, perhaps, till they are too desperate for remedy.

The consequences of such a separation are

peculiarly sorrowful to a mother. She has not only to lament the loss of her child's affection, she does not suffer from the mortification of neglect alone, but she shudders with apprehension, while she beholds the object of her tenderest solicitude exposed, rash and presumptuous, to the dangers of a world, the fatal powers of whose seduction are instanced by the ruin of so many a thoughtless victim. What must be her feelings under the pressure of such cruel reflections? And how must her grief be aggravated by recollecting that its cause is so near, and so dear to her heart, that it proceeds from that darling object, to whom, under affliction of any other kind, she would have looked for sympathy and consolation?

Is it thus a parent's fond expectations are frustrated? Can senseless vanity thus supplant her in her daughter's breast? Is this the accomplishment of those hopes, which have so often dilated the bosom of an exulting mother, when she contemplated the flattering prospect of her child's establishment? Is it possible, that in the very moment of her promised triumph, she should be shunned, condemned to solitude with the sting of disappointment, and the terrors of well-grounded apprehensions, as the companions of her lonely hours?

These suggestions, my dear friend, you have sufficient experience of the world to conceive, but too frequently verified in those walks of life, to which our attention is principally directed.

In this manner is a loving mother condemned to an anxious and painful solitude, by the unfeeling disregard of her child; and that child, possibly, the only remaining object that Heaven has spared to her maternal love. But be it remembered, that I speak of seclusion, as a probable, not a necessary consequence of a daughter's unkindness: we will allow that there is an alternative in dissipation; but it is such an alternative, as would not in this case, I fear, be found greatly preferable to melancholy seclusion. A sorrow that clings so closely to the heart, may happily be diverted; but hardly can it be shaken off in scenes of amusement. Be it however admitted, that if a parent's health resist the shock given to her peace, she may still assume an air of tranquillity, and veiling under that disguise, the sad reality of her sorrow, may yet mingle in society. She may too (for no possible advantage shall be disregarded) meet her beloved apostate in places of general resort, the public spectacle, or the crowded assembly; where, as opportunity of complaint is

precluded, the fear of admonition cannot impose restraint, or dictate flight: here the daughter may venture to indulge her fondest friend with her conversation. But is the conversation of a beloved object, whose affections are chilled, alienated, or dissipated, a source of gratification to one who feels the weight of such a loss, and mourns the depravity that caused it? Of what kind is that discourse which passes between persons circumstanced as we have supposed them? Will insipid observations on the occurrences of the day, or the relation of events, in which neither is interested, supply the place of those endearing communications, the melancholy remembrance of which can only embitter such meetings?

To wear the insipid smile of civil, cold complacency to an object, through whose conduct the heart is throbbing with the pain of slighted tenderness, to affect an interest in the trifling anecdote, or frivolous detail, while real anguish aches in every thought, is acting a part which sincerity can hardly approve, and fortitude but ill support.

And what is the good, for the attainment of which such trials are to be encountered? Can any thing be thence derived to lighten a sor-



row which presses so heavily on the mind, as to mock every effort that reason makes for its removal? Surely the burden must be increased by such experiments, and the mind must tell itself, that religion alone has power to alleviate the pressure of its distress.

But it may be possible for the parent to find amusements which are not imbittered by the presence of a thankless child. It is certainly possible to avoid meeting, and it may even be supposed, that in the absence of this beloved ingrate, amusements are capable of winning attention from misery, and suspending the pain of thought: but admit of every alleviation that affliction can be presumed to find in dissipation, and what is the result of all?

The mind may possibly obtain some short hours of interruption from its sorrow, and from itself; but these can hardly be reputed enjoyments. The respite that misery obtains from dissipation, is too much like the sleep which disease derives from opium; it lulls the pain it cannot cure, and stupifies the sufferer whom it cannot relieve; the slumbers while they last, are broken and uneasy; when gone, languor and lassitude are left behind. There is but little reason for an ungrateful daughter to suppose, that a parent who mixes in scenes

of gaiety, is unhurt by the thorn she has planted in her bosom. If such a one presume on such fallacious appearances, to speak peace to her own heart, she will, however, it may be hoped, when those appearances are withdrawn, when her mother can no longer seek for comfort in dissipation, recall the affection which she has so shamefully suffered to subside into coldness and indifference. She must be assured, that it is only while her parent was blessed with health, that she could be supposed capable of relishing any enjoyment.

Between the giddy scenes of fashionable life, and the silence of death, a merciful interval is generally allowed, sometimes a long one, wherein room may be found for the renewal of filial duty and tenderness. Then may the daughter who shunned and neglected her parent, while seeming to partake of the usual pleasures of society, have an opportunity of proving that her mind is not lost to sentiments of gratitude, nor insensible to the calls of duty. Here, indeed, an ample field is opened for the exercise and display of every generous principle, and every tender sentiment. Happy are those who avail themselves of the gracious opportunity to make amends for their past negligences; and happy the parents whose latter days are blessed by such

assurances of a child's returning affection: for it is at this declining period, that every comfort is felt with the most lively gratitude, as the faintest light, however dimly seen, cheers the weary traveller in the dark and tempestuous night. It is not merely the taste of pleasure and amusements, that accompanies health in its flight; every power of occupation also, departs in the train of the fugitive. To bodily indisposition is annexed a more grievous evil, that renders the sufferer dependant on others for every comfort that is not drawn from piety: this is a total inability of mental exertion. Attention becomes feeble and wavering, imagination chilled, curiosity no longer excited, the memory confused, and every faculty of the mind weighed down by an oppressive languor. Splendid talents, elegant accomplishments, and polite acquirements, are alike of no avail: piety within, and kindness from without, are all that remain to us. The sense of an entire dependance upon the tenderness of others, renders the mind most acutely sensible of neglect, and most feelingly susceptible of pleasure from every testimony of affection.

The period of a parent's sickness or infirmity, is therefore a period, every moment of which is productive of occasion for the exer-

cise of filial sympathy, which is no less gratifying to a tender and feeling mind, than acceptable and salutary to the sinking spirits of the helpless sufferer. Surely there is in the compassionate eye of pitying tenderness, a healing power that is not to be found in medicine. Hard, indeed, is the lot of those who are reduced to struggle with sickness, infirmity, and age, without the presence of some object dear to the heart, who may by soothing kindness lessen their affliction: for there are few so far above, or so far below the feelings of humanity, as not to look for some friend, on whom in the pangs of disease to lean for consolation. And it is natural to suppose, that in such moments the hopes of a suffering parent will be turned towards an obliged and deserving child. Should even a child in the days of thoughtlessness and dissipation, have been ever so guilty of neglect, yet now, while labouring under sickness and infirmity, a parent has a just right to expect that principle shall rise superior to levity, that compassion will be awakened, and gratitude revived at sight of her sorrows, that her last anguishes shall be softened by tender attentions, and that she may cast on her repentant child the last glance of her closing eyes, with forgiveness and a blessing.



In such expectations, it is painful to believe that any, even the worst of parents, should ever be disappointed. Yet, among those who die in the fashionable circles of the metropolis, how many must be so? How often does the intoxication of pleasure supplant a parent in a child's affections! Does not fashion daily usurp the rights of nature, and dissipation sink in oblivion the remembrance of the dearest claims?

Is there then no source of comfort left on earth for those who, labouring through the decline of life, feel a solicitude for the consoling attendance of their progeny, hardly less urgent than nature would suffer, were the nourishment necessary to existence withheld? Must claims the most sacred be made but to incur neglect? Must hopes which arise from fondness, be formed only to be killed by disappointment? There may still a resource be found amid these mortifications: a second generation is rising: the granddaughters cannot yet be pre-occupied by the duties of fashion; they are not yet the slaves of dissipation; they have leisure to furnish some of those consolations which a mother's unremitting engagements deny her the opportunity of supplying: their natural gaiety may cheer the gloom of solitude, their vivacity and fond

affiduity lighten the weary mind of its lassitude, and sooth the heavy hours of languor and pain.

Shall that age which sees its youth renewed in its grandchildren, be denied the enjoyment of their society? Can there be any impediments to so dear and just a pleasure? Alas! there are impediments, raised even by her whose personal attention to a parent ought to prevent the want of any other gratification. She deems it too heavy a task for young people to spend a few hours of each day in the joyless company of an infirm old woman. The mother, the gay, the giddy votary of pleasure, has herself too great a dread of such society, and too much tenderness for her offspring, to think such a punishment any part of their duty.

But beware, ye unthinking parents, how you inculcate such a lesson of inhumanity. How will your aching hearts accuse and condemn you, when the conduct it teaches, recoils upon yourselves? Vainly then, shall ye regret, having furnished a plea for insensibility, and supplied selfishness with a shield to cover it from shame. Besides the impolicy of such a lesson, the notions on which it is founded are nothing less than true.

Youth never finds dullness where it has exercise for its feelings; and every tender and generous sensation is roused by a consciousness of power to communicate relief to the sufferings of a person who is at once the object of pity, respect, and affection.

Let us imagine for a moment, an aged female surrounded by her grandchildren, who are assembled purposely to contribute to her amusement: how will they be elated by the flattering idea of being able to communicate pleasure to a superior? How melted into tenderness by the sufferings and the fondness of that superior? How will the countenance of the sufferer be brightened by the complacency and satisfaction which will tranquillize her mind? She will listen to their little narratives, and lively sallies of imagination, with the delight of partial fondness: their emulation to win her attention, and to engross her notice, will sooth, while it diverts her: in her desire to gratify each little candidate ambitious of her favour, she forgets her sorrows, and catches from the objects before her an intermission of suffering, that seems an earnest of returning health.

Can the susceptible mind of youth, ever responsive to the touch of joy, remain un-

moved at circumstances so agreeable to its feelings? Will it not behold the glistening eye, and tender smile of her whom it delights, with the triumph of self-applause on the happy success of its endeavours to please? Will not the warm glow of gratified benevolence be awakened in the unperverted mind of youth, on feeling itself capable of effacing the characters of sorrow, that pain or disappointment had impressed on the revered face of age? And can any one doubt, whether minds thus elevated by the consciousness of power to do good, thus expanded by the success of their endeavours, will be at the same time softened, refined, and improved? What is it then that parents fear in submitting their daughters to perform the kind offices of dutiful tenderness? Do they fear too early an exercise of those feelings which principally dignify human nature, which are the springs of every social virtue, and the purest sources of all the reciprocal blessings of life? These are not their fears, 'tis the dread of depressing the spirits of their children, and lessening their vivacity. If so, the fear then is void of foundation, though the hearts that entertain it be not void of insensibility. Let the grounds of this formidable apprehension be stated, by examining the mind of an ingenuous girl who



is neither corrupted by vanity, nor hardened by the pride of adventitious superiority.

If such a one were asked, wherein of the two occupations she found herself happiest, whether in administering comfort to a sick grandmother, or in sauntering round her mother's drawing-room, looking on card-tables, or listening to cold civilities and unmeaning compliments? I cannot doubt but it would be manifest from her answer, that the first had proved to her a source of pleasurable gratification; and the last, however amusing in the beginning, had generally ended in satiety and weariness.

If I do not err in my conclusion on this decision, if youth could find pleasure in exercises of benevolence and duty, why are they found irksome by those who having attained to maturity, must be supposed to perform them from higher motives, and to derive gratifications from them, to which younger minds must be strangers? May not this seeming paradox be fairly solved, by acknowledging that habits of incessant dissipation harden the heart, and render it inaccessible to delicate and elegant sensations? Is not such a solution justified by observing the domestic conduct of many who are in such habits? If the external

seeming differ from what passes within, it were surely better to follow the Apostle, who admonishes, "to avoid the appearance of evil." Appearances in this instance, constitute the grounds of my animadversions: if they are false, still we have a right to consult them; and they too generally inform us, that the duties assigned to daughters by nature, when summoned into action, are indolently devolved upon the hireling attendant. In the giddy round of fashionable toil, the daughter, indeed, will snatch a few short moments, to order that an experienced nurse be provided to attend her parent, one who is qualified to render her more useful service in the last periods of her existence, than could be expected from servants unused to such attendance. But what sort of consolation can the poor languisher derive from the cold offices of a person of this description, familiar with, and hardened by the continual sight of sufferings and of death? Can a daughter flatter herself with a hope of attentions, anxious and tender as those which filial piety should dictate, and which no other principle can keep alive, that sentiments by whose influence she herself is unmoved, should soften the breast of a mercenary stranger? One of those poor women whom poverty compels for pecuniary emolument to seek the residence of pain, and contemplate the mis-

ries of their fellow-creatures, as the medium of their profits? Habituated as such people are to behold the progress and pangs of every disease, they must needs be impenetrable to sympathy or to pity. Are they not in scenes that wring the heart of sensibility without affecting their own? Are not these very scenes an asylum to them from indigence? Is it not to be supposed, that harassed as they are by want, and lively as must be their sense of the sorrows concomitant on distress, they will look upon the anguish that nature suffers in the grasp of death, as an evil less to be lamented than many of those which are annexed to the condition of penury? Indifference then is not to be imputed as a fault to these nurses: it is no more a defect in them, than firmness is an imperfection in the surgeon, who, with unshaking hand, applies the agonizing knife to the wretch who faints under the pain it inflicts. But, as necessity alone can oblige us to submit to the operations of surgery, nothing less than necessity should compel us to resign a friend, and the best of all friends, a parent, to the unsympathizing service of a common nurse. Such a one, the thoughtless daughter might observe, would be ever obsequious to her mother's will: she would render prompt obedience to all her commands, or take care they should be executed by her

servants: from her experience, she must be best able to direct how relief may be most effectually administered to the sufferings of a patient, and more cannot be expected. True it is, a hireling stranger cannot do more; money was not made to purchase the thousand nameless, but inestimable kindnesses which rise involuntarily from tender friendship and affectionate gratitude. Yet they alone can satisfy the demands of a throbbing heart which pants for that first of comforts, pitying sympathy. These are wants the nurse cannot comprehend: they are wants which cannot be relieved, but by the beloved object who is alone competent to remove them.

In every heart, but that of a parent, the pain of slighted affection finds its cure in its cause. Unhappily that bosom, to whose peace the cold averted glance of frozen kindness is most cruelly fatal, knows not in the case of a child's neglect, the relief which attending circumstances can yield to less poignant sorrows: the bleeding wounds of an injured parent, can only be healed by lenient applications; they cannot be seared with caustics. Religion alone, thanks to the father of mercy, has power to assuage the anguish of every wrong: consolations may be drawn from that inexhaustible source of comfort, to sooth and to support a



spirit broken by filial ingratitude: this is the universal resource, as well as the penance of afflictions. But in the supposed instance its effects will not be more than a sad serenity, a mournful patience, that weeps while it bends with deep submission to the will of God.

But for the contempt of duty, the renunciation of feelings inseparable from the obligations of humanity, what can a daughter plead in her excuse?

There is not, I believe, any folly, however glaring to unprejudiced observers, for which its friends cannot fabricate a veil of illusive colouring to impose on reason, and shroud their darling from the reproofs of conscience. There is no fault, however heinous, for which those who commit it, have not some plausible pretence, that affords a ready subterfuge from the sting of shame: for in self-love there is a sophistry so fallacious, and so insidious, that it can impose silence on conscience, and extract food for vanity, from actions not only of an equivocal, but sometimes even of a criminal nature. Deceived by this enemy of all truth, a daughter, under whose neglect a parent had declined and died, may possibly believe herself innocent and faultless: for her neglect may not have extended to a total for-

getfulness of her mother ; she may have frequently bestowed upon her the languid hour that has preceded the appointed moment of resort to gayer scenes ; and she may flatter herself, that by these, and such like sacrifices, she has fulfilled her duty, discharged her debt of gratitude, and balanced the long account of filial obligations.

Others there are who persuade themselves, that nature has formed them of materials too fine or too fragile to bear fatigue : the weakness of their frames, and the tenderness of their feelings, are insuperable impediments to their attendance on a suffering friend ; forgetting that the compliance with fashion (from which no motives can deter them) imposes the most unremitting toil that can be exacted by a tyrant from a slave, far greater than is required by either duty or friendship.

Let us not regard then as other than the cant of affectation, the pretences of those who plead the tenderness of sensibility in excuse for cruelty, and alledge delicacy of constitution to vindicate the sacrifice of duty to the fatigue of dissipation. Surely that timidity cannot be entitled to excuse, which teaches benevolence to fly from the relief of another's sorrow, that represses the emotions of nature,

## CHILDREN TO PARENTS. 175

and silences gratitude, by pleading danger to personal ease, and loss of pleasure and amusement. When feelings implanted by the author of nature for the most beneficial purposes, are thus eradicated from the human bosom by base and ignominious pretences, what a perversion must be wrought in the minds of those who admit of them?

If it is a truth too evident for denial, that none but the inhuman refuse to administer comfort to a fellow-creature, lest the sight of misery might too deeply affect their own feelings, what are we to think of a daughter who leaves her parent to mourn in solitude under the pressure of infirmity, sickness, or sorrow, from apprehensions of too sensible a participation in her misery? Can she escape the execration of every mind that melts with pity at another's grief, or glows with indignation at that cruel insensibility which would assume the mask of tenderness?

And what can a person thus exposed to scorn and to abhorrence, find to support her under so dreadful a mortification? Can she resort to the consolations of religion? Can she derive firmness from conscious rectitude? Can she retain the friendship of one virtuous individual? No, religion has been forgotten,

rectitude sacrificed to fashion, and for friendship she must no longer hope. Can a mind insensible to filial affection deserve any attachment? Can it presume to claim tenderness, or to conciliate esteem? How terrible a sacrifice is that of duty to the folly and wickedness of the world! How poor a return does it make for the dereliction of those laws and injunctions that are written by Heaven in the heart of man, and can only be effaced by the vilest perversion of his nature!

Believe me, my dear friend, when I assure you, that those who have incurred the guilt I have been describing, endure a wretchedness which may truly be styled the worm that never dies: it preys upon them incessantly during the remainder of their miserable lives: however they may strive to conceal their disquietude, it breaks forth occasionally; and while it reminds others of its fatal cause, it aggravates their own sufferings. As torments like these must be borne without acknowledgement, they are incapable of any alleviation produced by sympathy; they adhere indissolubly to the guilty soul, and can only terminate with existence.

In the supposed cases we have been considering, my dear friend, it has been presumed,



that the daughter's matrimonial connections are such, as do not remove her to a distance from her mother, or that they allow her to spend part of the year in London, where her mother may reside at the same season. In these circumstances it is, that a parent's consignment to a dreary or painful solitude, may be imputable to her child's neglect; and then only is it her fault. But cases frequently occur, wherein the child may be united to one, whose situation may be remote from the country habitation of his wife's parents, and whose fortune and engagements may not admit of annual visits to the metropolis. Hence a necessity may arise, that shall impose a separation of mother and child, unwished by both, but disagreeable to neither. The dispensations of Providence are ever to be met with submission, and endured with patience. An absence from friends the most tenderly beloved, is borne with chearful resignation, while not embittered by the reflection, that coldness or unkindness was the cause. Where there is a mutual conviction of perfect attachment, many an hour of happiness may be derived by one from the other, however distant the countries they inhabit, or however long the term of their separation. Their absence will be to both a subject of tender, but not painful regret: it is caused against their

will, and protracted contrary to their wishes; but it is free from guilt, and therefore not afflictive to either. Opportunities for removing it will be sought with eagerness, and their re-union endeared by the most lively joys: in the mean time, circumstances of necessity must be ever independant of censure.

I will now beg leave to withdraw your attention from those scenes in which it may be very long before you are engaged as an actor, to the considerations of some minute particulars, which are more nearly connected with your present situation; lest, if I may use a simile, while we contemplate the distant prospect, we should overlook the briars and quicksands which may cross our paths, or lurk beneath our footsteps.

My wish is, my dear friend, to guard you against every species of evil that may possibly arise to annoy the reciprocal happiness subsisting between you and your parent. I am therefore induced to add to the length of this address, by particularizing some habits, which, if they were to intrude upon you, would render you, as a daughter, less amiable, and your mother consequently less happy, than both will be, if my hopes are prophetic.

I have not the least doubt, that in representing to your imagination a possible contingency, wherein disappointment, sickness, or age, might have injured that equanimity, or ruffled that serenity of temper, which a daughter should cherish in a mother, you feel firmly resolved to sacrifice every other pleasure, to that of soothing her troubles, and softening her sorrows. May this amiable resolution ever be maintained in its full force: but we must always remember, that it is easier to resolve than to execute, as it is easier to advise than to act. Opportunities for arduous exertions, occur but seldom to any one; but occasions for the mild exercise of the lesser virtues, are born of every moment. These are now your own: seize them, ere they are passed. When they invite you to manifest your respect, your gratitude, or your affection, to your mother, however trifling the means, think them not below your attention; the same occasion may not return; the neglect of an opportunity ever incurs some degree of blame; you may give pain, or mortify affection, by omitting a service trivial, indeed, in its apparent consequences, but as an expression of sentiment, infinitely dear to the feelings of a parent: I have already noticed, that parental claims, however sanctioned, are not generally regarded by those who should an-

swer them with all the respect to which they are entitled. This is a circumstance which may be reasonably deplored, since it must cause great and frequent deductions from the aggregate of human felicity. It is natural when we behold an evil, to wish it were remedied, and to inquire whence it proceeds: and I hope the opinions I have ventured to form on the evil above complained of, will contribute to excite your attention to the causes from which it flows, and to preserve you from their influence. Various instances of disregard or indifference of children to parents, have fallen under my observation. Some of them at the first view may appear very insignificant; but have not consequences of the most serious importance, arisen from circumstances that have been thought too trifling to merit notice?

The first instance that offers itself to my examination at this moment, will possibly seem a very remote cause, if any cause at all, of the coldness I have supposed to pervade the bosoms of young people towards their parents: but as it is prejudicial to the amity which might result from relative connections of consanguinity, I cannot pass it unobserved.

Among the caprices of fashion which mark



the present age, there is one, against which I cannot refrain from entering my protest. It is that which, if it have not affixed the odium of vulgarity to all family parties, has certainly induced a pretty general opinion, that those who can enjoy them, are deficient in taste, and too contracted for more extensive engagements, or more brilliant society. Hence those minds which are implicitly governed by fashion, become impressed with an idea, that attachment to the company of their relations, prevents their attaining to that refinement in taste and knowledge of high life, which are only to be acquired in the more numerous and splendid circles. Persons of this description, would possibly be more disconcerted at being detected in a domestic circle by a gay companion, than in being discovered in any acts of immorality or licentiousness. Young men in fashionable life, are, I fear, too frequently sufferers in their virtue and their happiness, from a weak submission to these absurd notions. Happily for the female sex, fashion is generally very tender of their reputations. The caprice which declares it unmeet for a young man to be seen in the same coach, in the same party at public places, or to inhabit the same house with his parents, is balanced in some measure, by one of still more absolute authority, which

forbids a young lady abroad, unattended by her natural guardians, or a competent delegate of their right. But the daughters are not exempted from the mortification and inconveniences arising from a brother's dread of running counter to the fashion. The person who conceives that ridicule is annexed to any marked appearances of attachment to his family, will not possibly think the reality deserves cultivation: and, as any feeling of that kind (which may have prevailed before his mind was perverted) might not be concealed without some trouble to himself, he will doubtless seek to dissipate them by every means in his power. Thus the son will be lost to his parents, and the brother to his sisters: nor will the mischief to be apprehended terminate here.

Those sisters may have been accustomed to regard the future representative of their family, with a partiality that induced them to connive at faults and imperfections. But however amiable an indulgent temper may be, it will certainly produce ill effects when carried to excess: an object of admiration, however faulty, we are too ready to imitate. The sisters on their side may learn to consider the attendance of a parent or of a relation on their pleasures, as a circumstance of needless for-

mality, which they may think better supplied, when they are accommodated by the society of a person, whose rank, appearance, or connections, are more splendid than those they can find at home. These conclusions are hardly forced beyond what experience will justify: but is such a system favourable to the good order and reputation of a family? Is it not rather ominous of its destruction? And if so, is it not injurious to the happiness of society?

Do not, my dear friend, infer from these strictures, that I consider the ties of blood as forming the only claims on affection. Reason, feeling, and experience, would all be adverse to such an opinion. Affection is a jewel of much higher price. It is a sentiment of the mind (when unconnected with duty and gratitude) that can only be excited by excellence of endowments, adorned by sweetness of manners, and individually endeared by personal kindness. I do not say, therefore, that every person who is a relation, is thereby qualified to be a friend. But as there is an equal chance that some of those united to us by blood, may be calculated for our attachment, by a conformity of manners, and similitude of sentiments, there can be no good reason for overlooking in our relations those qualities

which we should behold with complacency in a stranger. We ought to be particularly careful to do justice to the good character of those with whom we are most nearly connected, and most intimately acquainted. Great caution is necessary to avoid error in forming our judgement on the merits of those who are constantly under our observation: for, of such we see the faults in their worst colours, unpalliated and undisguised. From the closeness of our inspection, the defects of the picture are evident and striking, and experience unfortunately proves that we are less attentive to its beauties than its imperfections. Distance on the other hand is well known to soften the coarsest asperities of objects placed at a remote point of view. We ought therefore to reflect, that though the disagreeable qualities of those with whom we live, appear more visibly than those of characters farther removed from our examination, we should not thence conclude, that the former are less deserving of our affection and esteem than the latter. These being placed in the back ground of the prospect, their failings appear but as shades to their meritorious qualifications, or as spots are said to be perceived on the surface of the sun. But though faults and errors are found in all men, we may rely with much more reasonable confidence on the vir-



tues of those persons, whose bosoms are by constant inspection necessarily laid open to our view, than of those of whom our knowledge is slight and uncertain. Thus, when we discover in our relations such qualities as are entitled to our approbation (though tempered with the alloy of human frailty) surely both duty and interest should procure them our predilection. In this light, fashion is not a friend to our welfare, when it tends to discourage and interdict the attachment of the different members of a family to each other. And such is that fashion which seems to forbid their appearing in habits of intimacy.

It is in the friendly intercourse of domestic life, that the earliest opportunities must occur of mutual kindness and mutual service. Hence reciprocal good will improves into preference, and preference ripens into friendship. Thus the natural susceptibility of the mind is preserved by a reciprocation of kind offices, and benevolence is exercised by a participation in the joys and sorrows of others. But the feelings which produce these habits, and foster the happy dispositions of nature, are not excited by any thing that occurs in the giddy circles of gay insensibility: the spirit of sarcasm and censoriousness is clearly inimical to them. In the struggles of envy

they are subdued, and utterly destroyed in the internal perturbations raised by the ruinous vicissitudes of play. Yet, if these feelings are not exercised, they are lost. And where are they so likely to be kept awake and cherished, as amidst endearing kindnesses and domestic friendship? Without these gentle calls upon the heart, the native principles of benevolence may lie for ever dormant, without employment, and without effect. The diminution of happiness suffered individually from this artificial apathy, is great; but the the community at large are also losers, by a negligence which annihilates feelings given as sources of wide-spreading blessings. For benevolence is like a latent spark of fire, which, when fanned into action, spreads every moment broader and broader, shedding as it extends on every object within the verge of its influence, the comforts of its warmth, and the vivifying glow of its brightness.

As the best part of terrestrial felicity is comprised in the enjoyment of domestic union, and domestic amity, we should warmly insist on every circumstance which appears favourable to their preservation, and no less forcibly object to every thing that seems impedimental to blessings of such importance. You will, therefore, my friend, be prepared to see

my subsequent remarks employed on subjects seemingly of trivial import: but as these may tend to weaken, or to improve, the bonds of attachment between parents and children, you will not think the causes, however remote of such consequences, unworthy your consideration.

Many there are of good dispositions and sound sense, who, though convinced of the propriety of a parent's claims, and resolved upon rendering prompt obedience to their will in matters of importance, grow negligent of the lesser attentions that characterize affection, and remiss where deference ought to be expressed, and respect manifested. Satisfied with the integrity of their own minds, the principles of duty there fixed, and the purity of intention there formed, they carelessly omit the testimonies due to their own rectitude.

But how can the heart be known, unless it be allowed to reveal itself in manners and conduct? The neglect of trifles cannot be justified, where the lightest of them may express the kindest sentiments, and excite the most agreeable feelings. An intention to comply with the will of another, where the trial may never be made, cannot be of advantage to any mind, but that wherein it is conceived.

Neither should it be forgotten, that intended obedience is but small compensation for years, possibly of opposition or neglect, nor that the merit of compliance may at last be destroyed by the manner of yielding it.

There is a proud kind of indolence, sometimes joined to qualities most highly estimable, which seems to demand justice to conscious worth, without condescending to the lesser acts of urbanity and kindness, that are resistless claims on affection, even with little pretensions to esteem. Great qualities alone never engaged favour; nor do great services excite gratitude when arrogantly rendered. If we wish to please others, we must seem pleased our ourselves; and, therefore, without cultivating habits of complacency and civility, we can never be amiable.

If we wish to oblige, we must think ourselves happy in the power of doing it: this sentiment communicates to the countenance of a benefactor, the air of receiving, rather than of conferring a favour; and the sense of obligation entertained by the person served, is ever proportionate to the degree of delicacy manifested in the act. For there is often in the manner of rendering the most trivial kindness, somewhat that affects and interests the



feelings infinitely more than do the most important benefits, when bestowed with an imposing, a supercilious, or an ungracious air. The indulgence then of a haughty exterior, is certainly impolitic; and the assumption of it where it is not natural, is highly blameable. In the common intercourse of society, it makes enemies, and loses friends: but in the retirements of domestic life, it destroys harmony, lessens comfort, and chills affection. As these effects are deductions not only from individual, but also from social happiness, the removal of their cause, self-partiality, becomes an object worthy the most strenuous exertions of self-denial. "Be kindly affectioned one to another in brotherly love," says the great teacher of salvation. If such were our minds, our manners could not be other than amiable. For affection has in look and action, a language for its own expression, that in some cases, precludes the use of words, and triumphs over their utmost energy, by carrying to the heart conviction of its sincerity. The characters of this language are almost indescribable; but my imagination offers at this moment some imperfect traits, as being the most definable expressions of an amiable child's affection to a deserving parent.

I see in such a person an observant, but

unobtruding attention to promote a mother's pleasure, administer to her comfort, or contribute to her convenience, a glad alacrity in complying with her wishes, and executing her will, which is equally free from the officiousness of ostentation, and the formal parade of affected zeal. To these active qualities are joined many passive virtues; whence arise habits the most acceptable and engaging. Among them will be a uniform deference, expressing the esteem of a liberal mind, not the servility of an abject one; a mild regard of admonition, and a lively gratitude for advice, which speak the respect of filial piety, and the sensibility of tender feelings. With mind and manners such as these, I associate the idea of a chearful and ingenuous countenance, forming altogether a charm of such irresistible power, as cannot fail to inspire with delight a parent's bosom, and win regard from the least interested observer. I have given you here a very imperfect outline of the amiable whole I would wish to describe. Be yours, my friend, the honour and happiness of finishing in your behaviour the defective sketch. Oh! that the picture which lives in my imagination were realized in every parent and every child. Why it is not more generally so than at present, there is reason to suppose many causes may be assigned. Im-

pediments to the discharge of filial duties, may sometimes arise from circumstances of station and character; but many of the disagreeable occurrences in families may be most frequently deduced from the temper of its members. That quality of the mind which is understood by temper, is not, perhaps, in any two individuals, precisely the same: yet, though in all it is naturally different, in all it is capable of being rendered subservient to reason and religion; and where there is modesty enough to recognize the imperfections of self, and sense enough to desire improvement, the reform will be easily effected. But confidence is natural to youth, and is almost universally at some period, and in some instances, an impediment to the advancement of every individual in science and in virtue. However, what it protracts it does not always preclude. There is no natural poison unprovided with its antidote, no natural ill too great for cure. The mind most subject to haughtiness or petulance, has still the means of restraining the one, and calming the other. The remedy for such tempers, may be found in the cultivation of that gentleness and placidity of manners, which the gospel recommends, and experience teaches to be most conducive even to our temporal interests. "Blessed," says Christ, "are the meek, for

"they shall inherit the earth." The graceful mildness of deportment imparted by this virtue to its possessors, produces an influence over the minds of men, which is experimentally found almost irresistible, and proves an ample compensation for the self-denials and restraints that were necessary for the attainment of this most useful of all virtues for the purposes of good order in society. Where a severity of disposition is implanted in the mind, and the seeds of meekness consequently but thinly sown, we should not too strictly censure the casual ebullitions of a temper that requires more than ordinary pains to be subdued. Nor should we be discouraged, though we find ourselves subject in an unguarded moment to lose our composure, when we had believed it to be firmly established. The slightest accident that wounds a darling folly, or shakes a favourite prejudice, may sometimes discompose the best mind, and overspread it with gloom, or inflame it with anger: but such lapses as these are soon recovered by returning reason, and may be considered at the worst, as only so many steps trodden back in the ascent to virtue.

If it be necessary in every concern, and in every relation of life, to maintain a guard over our temper, it is much more essentially



so in the connection between parent and child; because, there the starts and irregularities of humour, must be attended with consequences peculiarly destructive to domestic peace. Thence it becomes particularly incumbent on a child, whose mind is liable to be surpris'd into feelings incompatible with duty and respect, studiously to avoid occasions productive of such effects.

The tempers of men are generally more liable to be ruffled and disordered by the mortifications incident to idle dissipation, than any other causes; the mind is much oftener irritated by contention on subjects, in themselves totally insignificant, than by opposition of sentiment in matters of real importance. It might, indeed, be supposed, that contention between parent and child, was precluded by the nature of their connection: but if the latter be so far negligent of the respect that connection is calculated to impose, as to fall into the wordy petulence of argumentation, the sense of insulted dignity will mingle no small degree of bitterness with that sorrow which flows from wounded tenderness. The child will generally silence an opponent who suffers shame for the impropriety of an opposition from that quarter, and will triumph probably in fancied victory:

but at what a price is such victory purchased? The peace of a friend, a benefactor, and protector, is sacrificed to the satisfaction of establishing a position, which, whether certain or erroneous, may be of little or no consequence. But supposing that the object of dispute were essential, as a moral truth, or maxim of prudence, propriety, or politeness, yet, would such a supposition justify petulance and wrangling? In such cases a modest defence of opinion will never be offensive, because it cannot indicate a want of respect, or coldness of affection: but the desire of self-defence, and a determination to overcome, are very different in their nature, and also in their effects. The child who urges reasons in behalf of an opinion, must not mingle with zeal for truth, the warmth of disputation, lest it should render argument intemperate, and opposition disrespectful. Persons advanced in life, have strong prepossessions in favour of the mode of thinking to which they are habituated; and admitting, that in some this runs to an excess which deserves the name of obstinacy, yet, ought it to be regarded with the indulgence due to every infirmity of age: in a parent it has a claim to respect, as well as to indulgence. But independent of this consideration, there are many others that should produce a deference

to the parent's opinions, or at least a forbearance to controvert what does not meet with acquiescence. For it is somewhat in favour of the opinions of those older than ourselves, that they are founded on a persuasion established by time; and surely some degree of respect is due to ideas that have been upheld long before a child could possess the faculty of reasoning upon them. Is it meet, therefore, that they who have so long cherished them, should implicitly exchange them for the precipitate conclusions of presumptuous youth? There is apparently, at least, an equal chance of there being as much truth in the decisions that have held for years, and have the sanction of time, as in those that claim the superiority of genius and improvement over these slow teachers of vulgar knowledge: or, were it otherwise, yet being the basis of a parent's opinion, it would certainly become the modesty of youth, to leave unquestioned those positions which it may be too much enlightened to adopt.

In such a forbearance there is prudence as well as duty; for even to the spectator, who has no particular bias of favour or affection to either party, the vexatious contradiction of a child, exercised against a parent's sentiments, is productive of great disgust: and if

such be its effects on an indifferent observer, how must they be felt in a bosom which is at once pained and mortified by the opposition it meets from a beloved object? Strange infatuation! despicable perverseness! can a mind not totally divested of insensibility, figure to itself a satisfaction half so gratifying, as that which must result from the consciousness of having sacrificed an unwarrantable desire of pre-eminence to a sense of duty? Were a child ever so intimately conscious of being supported by truth, yet, what is the triumph obtained by argument, when a parent's heart is disquieted? Were it not better to yield even to caprice, than to glory in so unnatural a victory? For true filial affection will regard with tender pity even the caprices of a parent, softened perhaps by disappointment, rendered captious by the infirmities of age, and harassed by pain, sickness, or sorrow. Silence is at most but a costless tribute of respect; and respect from youth to age, is not only prescribed by the universal institutes of civility, but strongly insisted upon in the sacred writings, as an injunction founded upon, and strictly allied with, the reverence of the Deity. "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of old men, and fear the Lord thy God."



Isaiah in denouncing vengeance against Jerusalem, enumerates among the evils that should occur to the Jews, "the child's behaving himself proudly against the antient." If age be in itself thus respectable, how peculiarly is it intitled to deference in the person of a friend, a guide, a protector, a benefactor, or to sum all in one word, a parent?

From the aggregate of evidence in favour of the respect due to age, it appears incumbent on every one, to preserve it in their own minds, from every thing that can impair its energy. Hence it is advisable in all young people, particularly those who possess the blessing of retaining the authors of their being, to form to themselves a system of conduct, which shall hold them equally distant from undue familiarity on one hand, and ceremonious indifference on the other. Though practice seldom rises to the perfection attainable in theory, yet the establishment of certain rules, is furnishing the mind with a compass, which, if not fully sufficient to hold it in a right course, yet by pointing out the degree of its deviation, will constantly incite it to regain its due direction, and by redoubled diligence to compensate for its wanderings. Children should be attentive to their behaviour in what relates to their parents, not

only in their presence, but also in their absence: the first is dictated by a regard to the peace of a parent; the last is prescribed by a consideration of the effect which contrary habits will have on their own minds.

On no account should any one indulge a censorious humour, or a taste for ridicule, at the expence of a parent. Much more amiable in the eyes of others, and much more satisfactory to one self, were an affectionate endeavour to cover, or excuse their foibles and infirmities. Never to speak of them but in terms of respect, is the surest means of guarding against the intrusion of sentiments adverse to that consideration, which is so indispensably their due. I am persuaded, people may talk themselves into contempt of persons and things, the most highly deserving of reverence. The mind is often influenced by the tongue which it ought to govern. The instances of such perversion of natural order are every where manifest. The imagination is often impressed with terror, while the tongue relates stories of horrid and tragic catastrophes, which it is convinced are fabulous. A person who affects to speak lightly on sacred subjects, soon acquires the habit of thinking with equal levity.

On this principle, it is, that I object to a growing custom (as yet, indeed, far from general in its influence) of suppressing the forms by which the ties of nature are expressed and acknowledged. The blended merit of politeness and affection, every one feels and confesses: then why should an arbitrary caprice be allowed to strike out of their vocabulary, words that are friendly to the preservation of reciprocal attachment? I do not mean to plead the recall of that banished exile, cousin, nor to vindicate its extensive application in those times, when it was used to recognize the ties of consanguinity through half-a-dozen successive generations: though even on this ground there is room for argument. It is in the nearer relative connections that I am at a loss to conceive what possible advantages can be expected to accrue from substituting those ceremonious epithets, which have been judiciously established, as appendages of rank, and barriers to vulgar familiarity, to such as express those relations. Uncles and aunts, for instance, seem to be hastening down the stream of oblivion after the exploded cousin. Father and mother are not yet exploded; but it is to be feared, they also may suffer banishment from polite society. It is not impossible, that the fastidiousness of fashion should take exception at any terms which are as fami-

liar to the poor as to the rich, and used alike in the cottage and the palace. The first step to this revolution is made by parents themselves, who always designate their children by such titles, or annex to their names such epithets, as belong to the station they hold in society. Will not children follow an example so sanctioned? Will the young be willing to appear with less fashionable indifference upon their entrance on the stage, than is displayed by those who are retiring from it? If the mother blush to pronounce the endearing name of daughter, will not the child in like manner, suppress the appellation, with which habit, from early infancy, had associated ideas of love, gratitude, and respect? Good breeding is ill replaced by ceremony, especially, when this contradicts the inclinations of nature. Where these are consistent with filial sentiments, to substitute mere politeness in their stead, is absurdity and affectation: it conceals what when seen, must excite the most agreeable sentiments, and is absolutely like wearing a mask over a beautiful face. Why should a mother or a child, when sensible of the value of their tender relation to each other, disguise that sensibility under the ceremonious coldness of common acquaintance? I can see no reason for such a simulation; but I feel many that are absolutely against it.



First, if the mask be not worn by mutual convention, its chilling aspect must alarm that mind which, it may be presumed, has the greatest sensibility. Secondly, if it be assumed by consent of the parties, and perfect understanding of each other's motives, the evil to be apprehended, is, that the indifference they mean to counterfeit, should in time be realized; and habits of affectation become habits of insensibility. Should the proscription of words which characterize natural affinity, become general, you, my friend, would not, I think, deny your countenance to the poor exiles of a tyrannic fashion. I am inclined to give to fashion as wide a dominion as can be allowed her, without trespassing on the rights of nature and reason: but I cannot wish to see her usurp universal empire. To her direction be submitted the establishment of the household, equipage, and dress, of those who are born to move within the circle of her influence: let her regulate the time and manner of paying and receiving the customary dues of polite intercourse, and determine the respective merit and pre-eminence of public amusements: these things, and their etceteras, cannot come under the jurisdiction of wisdom and sentiment: to comply, therefore, with the usage of the world, as far as is consistent with station and circumstances, is not

only innocent, but more meritorious than to oppose it. Dissenters from custom, who can assign no valid reason for their dissent, betray too much of the sources of discontent, or the pride of singularity, to deserve praise, or engage imitation. You will, I trust, conform to fashion in every thing that is perfectly innocent, and compatible with reason; but you will not allow her any influence over your mind. You will tenaciously guard the liberty to feel the just sensations of nature, and to use the language by which those feelings are expressed. A mind of quick sensibility is awake even to verbal distinctions, ever scrupulously nice in its choice of words that are expressive of sentiment, conscientiously averse to use those which convey too much, and hardly less reluctant to adopt the mere style of compliment, where affection is engaged, reverence due, or gratitude claimed. Should such a mind, in compliance with fashion, submit to banish those long-established and well-founded discriminations in speech that mark our dearest attachments, it is much to be doubted whether sentiments of the highest value might not be involved in their destruction.

It is now more than time that I should bring this subject to a conclusion. After fa-

vouring me, my dear friend, with your attention through so many pages, it only remains that I should close this, my last address, by expressing my fervent wishes for the continuation of the felicity you now enjoy in the society of your loving parent. May you embrace with pleasure and alacrity, every opportunity of manifesting your attachment: and when it shall please Almighty God finally to terminate her mortal probation, may your sorrow for her loss be softened, by recollecting that she carried with her that highest of all maternal blessings, the satisfaction of having experienced to her last moments, that affection, that obedience, that unbounded love and veneration, which is the noblest praise of a worthy and dutiful child.

I have been thinking of you very much lately, and  
 wondering how you are getting on. I hope you are  
 well and happy. I have been very busy lately,  
 but I have managed to find some time to write  
 to you. I have been thinking of you very much  
 lately, and wondering how you are getting on. I  
 hope you are well and happy. I have been very  
 busy lately, but I have managed to find some  
 time to write to you. I have been thinking of  
 you very much lately, and wondering how you  
 are getting on. I hope you are well and happy.



*Additional Thoughts.*

FROM humility, my young friend, arise some of the most amiable virtues that adorn human nature. These virtues are patience, fortitude, content, and charity. There are instances, indeed, of the three first having appeared in many who could not be supposed to possess very humble spirits. But these instances do not in any degree affect my position; because I hardly think it possible these virtues reach that perfection in such minds, as they visibly attain to, where their foundation is laid in the rational and dignified humility of Christ. I have ever observed the patience of the proud was rather a disdain of complaint, than that resigned and quiet submission to sufferings, which is derived from the gospel. Their fortitude appeared rather a shame of being overcome, than the effort of an unbroken spirit, that meets misfortune with courage, in confidence of future reward; and their content seemed a sullen bending to necessity, with nothing of that chearful and willing acquiescence, which tranquillizes the mind that is sensible of the insignificance of those things it sought after, and convinced it has as much

as it deserves. Should your observation have produced any seeming proofs to the contrary of what I have advanced, yet, I am confident to affirm, however the three first qualities in question may have supported their credit, though destitute of humility, yet, that charity never extended to those nameless beauties and blessings, which are its natural productions, when under the influence of pride. I do not confine my idea of charity to the mere habit of giving: to that very little minds are equal. In order to render giving a virtue, it should be accompanied by the highest qualities of nature and religion. But I shall refer the description of charity in its enlarged and comprehensive sense, to a latter part of this address, after having spoken on patience, fortitude, and content: to the first I solicit your present attention.

Nothing is more undeniable than that suffering is inevitably the lot of man. The Stoic philosophers, while they denied pain to be an evil, acknowledged that pain subsisted; and the disciples of Epicure, who sought pleasure with such assiduity, still owned the existence of something opposite to the object of their pursuit, which they feared and fled. Endless were the disputes to support or confute the tenets of these different sects; and

many the investigations to discover the cause of the visible prevalence of evil. But, the most animated exertions of mere human ability were vain; and the light of reason, which broke in short flashes of splendid brightness from a few Heathens of uncommon sagacity, served but to render more visible the horror of that darkness which hung over the minds of the Gentile world. Evil was seen, was felt universally; but its cause was only conjectured, and its cure remained enveloped in impenetrable mystery, until it pleased Almighty God to send upon the earth a great and shining light, which dissipated the darkness of the shadow of death, and gave mortals to know (as far as it was good that they should know) the secrets of Heaven. Christ at once revealed the cause and the end of the sufferings of humanity, shewing the one to be in its corruption, the other to be in its amendment and preparation for a higher state of being. He does not in a fallacious strain of argumentation, tell us that pain is not pain, or that the sense of it can be drowned in the delirium of voluptuous pleasure; but he teaches us, that the frailty of our nature, and the corruptions of our minds, lead us to sin, and thence arises a necessity of suffering, which is inflicted or permitted by the appointment and superintendence of a tender father, to reclaim us

from evil, and fit us for an eternity of bliss; thus giving us in the cause of our griefs, a motive for their endurance. He assures us, it is true, that our present existence is but a state of probation, and its sufferings, a mild and salutary discipline, in which we are exercised for our good; yet, does he not leave us with the melancholy certainty of sorrow for our lot, but teaches us patience, as the means of softening our trials, and insuring the highest blessings, as their reward hereafter. Nor was it by precept only that he taught us how we ought to suffer, but he added the persuasion of his own great example: for having condescended to take upon him our nature, he submitted to its keenest afflictions, and became a pattern of patience for us to imitate.

And dare we, with the assurance that all must suffer, neglect to cultivate a disposition to suffer well? Or can any of us be so infatuated, as to slumber on in a belief, that we alone are exempted from the common lot of humanity, till the storm bursting on our heads, shall wake us to anguish, unprepared to endure its violence? Is this to reap the benefits of his suffering and death, who lived and died to teach us the way of everlasting life? You would think a person foolish, who set out on a journey, careless to guard against



the contingencies of roads and robbers, or the vicissitudes of weather: and is this kind of Improvidence more disgraceful to common sense, than that which neglects to prepare the mind for the day of affliction, is disgraceful to the professor of Christianity? Let us suppose it were possible to be secure from any great calamity; that you should never see the dearest object of your affections descend to the grave, when you thought it yours for a length of years; suppose disappointment should never cross your views, and cut off your brightest prospects of earthly blifs; suppose yourself exempted from the torture of every excruciating disease: yet, after all this has been supposed, there remain in the world evils enow, to which we are obnoxious, to prove the necessity of patience. The imagination alone of an impatient person, will furnish ills to sour the happiest circumstances, and cloud the fairest fortune. Think you, because your path appears with flowers smoothly spread, that no thorns are hid beneath? If such be your expectation, their slightest touch shall render every blessing vain. Where an impatient spirit resides, the least asperity irritates and inflames, and every pleasurable sense is frequently lost in a momentary frenzy. But remember, that to deprive ourselves through impatience of the blessings bestowed upon us

by Providence, argues not only imbecility, but, what is worse, a criminal ingratitude to the giver of all good.

There is an importance annexed to patience, which I cannot describe so well as you will learn and perceive it in your commerce with the world, and by attending to your own sensations. I think you will be convinced from observation, that of all the passive virtues, it is that which obtains most respect from the wise and good: even the slightest provocation that is borne with patience, reflects on the sufferer a dignity, that rises in proportion to the magnitude of the offence. You will perceive an air of elevation in a modest possession of one self, that is sure to attract esteem from its beholders. But, however valuable this virtue may be as attractive of regard, its highest importance is felt in the heart of its possessor; for there is in the sensations of anger and resentment something so comfortless, and in those arising from a conscious forbearance, a pleasure so soothing and impressive, that alone, it proves sufficient reward to a mild and placid disposition, by the internal serenity which it produces. Employ then, my dear friend, all your assiduity to enrich your mind with this sovereign balm, this universal panacea: its uses in prosperity are great; but should adversity overtake you without it,

your sufferings will be aggravated, and the advantages derivable from them lost. "Great" says the Scripture, "is your reward, if, by "patience in well doing, ye persevere unto "the end." But what will be the consequence of a peevish and querulous yielding to necessity? It must give a keener edge to every affliction, and rob you of the reward that is held out to those who suffer without murmur. Adversity, however, will compel obedience; and more humility and patience are learnt in one week of her discipline, than pride will condescend to receive from volumes of precepts and examples. But I hope you will not wait till the lash enforces docility: you will, I trust, accustom your mind so to use prosperity, that it may be prepared to reap every advantage intended by Providence to be drawn from affliction. But allow me before I leave this subject, to caution you against an affectation of patience, which deserves the more aversion and abhorrence, as it is frequently employed with a success fatal to the cultivation of the virtue it imitates, and deceives people into a belief that we are patient, when in fact, we are unaccommodating and discontented. What I allude to is very common among people, who being strangers to real evils, and desirous of distinction, however obtained, magnify mole hills into mountains,

to catch the attention, excite the pity, and win the admiration, of those on whom they impose by fallacious representations.

These kind of people will descant upon hair-breadth escapes, wherein others would not have seen danger, enumerate the hardships of circumstances, in which thousands would not have felt inconvenience, expatiate on the agonies and tortures they have endured from disorders that numbers have sustained without thinking they deserved to be reckoned painful. On our intimates and friends, the repetition of this folly soon renders it ineffectual; but on ourselves it imposes a conceit that we are as exemplary for our patience, as eminent for our sufferings. In order to impress the same ideas on others, a detail of imaginary or magnified misfortunes, is concluded by some expression implying quiet acquiescence or heroic fortitude: "there's no remedy" "but patience, I must bear it as well as I am" "able; I don't complain; time will render it" "familiar, or my feelings less acute." Such a series of common-place professions and maxims may possibly, by gaining the applause of children and servants, procure gratification to the feelings of the sufferer: but never does this affectation of patience display so much absurdity, as when it is joined with pretensions to excessive and romantic tender-



ness and sensibility, in the case of others as well as our own. You will, from what I have said, be able sufficiently to comprehend the ridicule of the characters I allude to, and to hold them in proper contempt.

Those pretences to patience may sometimes be deserving of pity, as originating in a natural defect of intellect: in others, they may be traced to the improper treatment of parents and friends, during those years when habits are acquired, that accompany us to the grave: in these cases, compassion ought to soften disgust, and silence censure. There is another class, whose disease seems to proceed from the weakness of a mind, enervated by the luxury of prosperity, and rendered impatiently sensible to the smallest touch of adversity, through the excesses of self-indulgence. To pity or excuse these, is as difficult, as it would be to commiserate a person suffering under the effects of immoderate eating or drinking. Indignation is justly roused, when under the affectation of patient suffering, we discover the little artifice of a selfish pride, employed in exacting admiration and esteem, by falsehood and deception. How much more certainly might the desires of such be gratified, by endeavouring to render themselves objects of affection, rather than beggars of compassion. An impostor who tells you a fictitious

tale of sorrow to obtain your money, is innocent in comparison of those who seek by imposture to rob you of your ease and enjoyment. Cold and hunger may be some excuse for the deceit, which is employed to secure a dinner, or procure the shelter of a garret from the damps of night, and the inclemency of weather; but the deceit that has no motive but the paltry pride of interesting us in feigned misfortunes, has no plea for indulgence: it is not only a violation of truth, but an enemy to society, by interrupting social pleasure. Though real affliction commands our sympathy, the mind feels resentment, when its pity has been extorted by hypocrisy; and if not actuated by aversion of the object, it will certainly be liberal of its contempt. The consequences of such a propensity to groundless complaint, are very pernicious; those whom it most frequently persecutes, and who are of course aware of its injustice, being usually members of the same family, and consequently the nearest friends of the person who thus sinks himself into contempt. But setting aside the meanness of hypocrisy, as it costs much more trouble to counterfeit, than to practise a virtue, if patience be not seated in the mind, though a smooth brow under pretended torments may induce strangers to suppose it there, how will the deception hold, when real anguish shakes the frames when

## ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS. 215

nothing can effectually preserve the mind from dejection and despondency, than a patience rooted in Christian humility, and supported by Christian hope and confidence? Thus, when the day of trial comes, the habit of magnifying trifles into importance, will have seduced the mind into such false estimates of good and evil, that it will recoil with dread and astonishment at those crosses and vexations, which, to the eye of sober reason, are but the common lot of all, in one period or other of their journey through life.

That you may not be subject to the weakness I have here pointed out, be vigilant in suppressing those inward emotions that have a tendency to vanity and ostentation. Patience is a virtue of which you have not ascertained the possession: as you are particularly happy in your health, so have you been hitherto a stranger to disappointment and sorrow. How you might, therefore, bear either sickness or affliction, even you yourself cannot be competent to determine: you must therefore suspend your decision of the strength of your own mind in these particulars, until you have some better proof than mere opinion. In the mean time, I recommend to you an unfeigned cultivation of humility, and on that to found an acquiescence in every little accident or occurrence that does not exactly accord with

your inclination: most rigidly restrain your imagination from giving to trifles an importance they do not deserve: endeavour to think with rectitude, and if such a simile may be permitted, not to suppose the sting of the wasp has the venom of the asp.

I repeat it again, the affectation of patience is the result of pride; if you despise the cause, you will be superior to the effect: be humble, be accommodating, in the days of prosperity; then will you be resigned and truly patient under the pressure of affliction; happy in the one state, respectable in the other, and firm in your hope of future bliss. Remember the character of our Saviour: it is not in my power to illustrate it; but it is the bright example which we are to imitate as nearly as we can. A moment's reflection upon that great precedent, must check, it might be supposed, the strongest impulse to complaint. When we contemplate the incessant perplexities and sufferings, which attended that part of his life which is recorded in the gospel, surely nothing can more strongly excite us to patience, than the uniform gentleness, and passive resignation, with which he submitted to the severest distresses, and most cruel trials, that are incident to human nature.

F I N I S.





THE HISTORY OF THE  
LIFE OF  
JAMES OGLETHORPE  
BY  
JOHN STURGES  
IN TWO VOLUMES  
VOL. I.  
LONDON: PRINTED BY J. JOHNSON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD, 1784.

THE HISTORY OF THE  
LIFE OF  
JAMES OGLETHORPE  
BY  
JOHN STURGES  
IN TWO VOLUMES  
VOL. I.  
LONDON: PRINTED BY J. JOHNSON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD, 1784.